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THE SMOKING FURNACE AND THE BURNING LAMP

(*Genesis* xv. 17)

HERBERT JAMES FLEMING

THE SMOKING FURNACE
AND
THE BURNING LAMP

A Group of Sermons
concerning Doctrine

EDITED BY
THE REV. P. B. CLAYTON, M.A., M.C.
VICAR OF ALL HALLOWS, BARKING-BY-THE-TOWER

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

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WE, WHO WRITE HEREIN, WOULD DEDICATE
OUR FRIENDSHIP

TO

HERBERT JAMES FLEMING, C.M.G.,
1873–1926.

Scholar of Pembroke College, Oxford;
Chaplain of R.M.A., Woolwich;
Senior Chaplain of the Guards;
Chaplain of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea; and
Honorary Administrative Padre of Toc H.

WHO

not only loved men, but liked them;
and having ministered of the courage
which comes from God, in Christ,
went bravely all his days.

The royalties on this book, and further gifts, will go towards the Endowment of a Chaplaincy in Toc H, bearing his name and aiding the work he loved so well. Such letters should be sent to Rev. P. B. Clayton, All Hallows Berkyngechurch, Byward Street, London, E.C.3.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	REX BURRY AND CORPORAL BRADBEAR	9
II.	THE EMMAUS INNKEEPER . . .	16
III.	THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY . . .	24
IV.	THE HOPE FOR TO-MORROW . . .	29
V.	TWO MEN'S WORK—YOUNGER BROTHERS OF TO-DAY, ... (From *The Times* of Oct. 29, 1920.)	35
VI.	LOVE AND DUTY, by the Right Rev. EDWARD TALBOT, D.D., Bishop	38
VII.	TOC H AND SERVICE, by the Rev. PRYOR GRANT, Padre of Toc H, New York . .	43
VIII.	TOC H—WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT MAY BECOME, by the Rev. HAROLD HUBBARD, D.S.O.	53
IX.	THE IDEAL OF TOC H, by the Rev. W. MUIRHEAD HOPE, M.A., Deputy Vicar, All Hallows, Barking-by-the-Tower . . .	63
X.	THE BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL OF TOC H IN CALCUTTA, by the Rev. CYRIL PEARSON, M.A.	68
XI.	WHAT IS TOC H? THE STORY OF A LIGHT, by the Rev. G. F. MACLEOD, B.A., M.C., Collegiate Minister of St Cuthbert's Parish Church, Edinburgh	71
XII.	TOC H—A REPORT FROM GLASGOW IN 1926, by the Rev. G. F. MACLEOD . . .	82
XIII.	AUSTRALIA'S NEED, by the Very Rev. HORACE CROTTY, Dean of Newcastle, N.S.W.	87
XIV.	THE CHRISTIAN BASIS OF TOC H, by the Very Rev. HORACE CROTTY	93

PAGE

XV. A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AT MANCHESTER, by the Rev. J. H. Bateson, C.B.E., . . 104

XVI. LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS, by the Ven. J. H. Darbyshire, M.A., Archdeacon of Sheffield . 107

XVII. SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP, by the Rev. F. R. Barry, M.A., D.S.O. 113

XVIII. INTO ALL THE WORLD 118

XIX. THREE SIMPLE THINGS 123

XX. TO A CAMP CHIEF, concerned with a class on Religion in Rovering 128

XXI. IN TRIBUTE TO HERBERT FLEMING . 134

XXII. ARMISTICE SUNDAY 137

ON THE ROAD HOME 143

N.B.—Papers without a name against them are by the Editor.

I.—REX BURRY AND CORPORAL BRADBEAR

I AM set down to write a prelude to a small book of sermons, put out in the name of a Society which enthrones action and abases preaching. In no sense an official publication, this symposium must not be taken too seriously. There is no budding Bossuet here, only a group of work-a-day Ministers of Religion who have met for the only reason which makes men meet, because they have an ultimate relationship. The unity which flourishes in diversity is not so unusual, after all. The Flanders recreation hut of a few years back played many parts in the course of a Sunday morning, and sheltered all modes of worship, one after another, with the universal tolerance of a King Asôka himself. Good Christian teaching is well worth having, from whatever point of the compass it may happen to come. That is the common view, and it takes a lot of routing. Yet it will defeat itself, where the teacher is compelled to halt on the verge of any distinctive outlook or experience. The heart may unite, but the mind must often divide. We cannot further unity by giving away our principles; for the principles are not our property. They are not ours to surrender. So in Toc H we do not affect, we do not even sanction, the transfer of denominational allegiances; and thus among many hundreds of those clergy and pastors who are now most happily concerned with Toc H activities, envy and ill-fellowship are alike unknown.

I can sustain this theme no further now. Any faculty of concentration has snapped for the time being under the pressure of an occurrence none too rare in the chronicles of any work among young men in big cities. There has

been a sudden illness: a sudden operation: a sudden death. In the old church across the road there rests to-night the body of a young musician, a happy hosteller for the last three years in one of the London Houses of Toc H.

This was not the beginning of our friendship, for down in Portsmouth before the war I knew him as a child. And now, in one short week, culminating in a second ghastly operation for peritonitis, he has died, an only boy. His parents have gone down again to Portsmouth, and we meet there again on Tuesday for the funeral. Meanwhile, he lies before the Lamp he loved and served, and round him all night through a group of Mark I men are quietly keeping vigil. After some hours with them, I stole away to work; but soon I shall rejoin them for the last period before the day dawns and the Bread he loved is Broken. One of those now watching is one of the two medical students—both Toc H men—who held Rex in their arms on Thursday, during the second operation; when only a local anæsthetic could be administered.

This is, beyond doubt, a strange interruption to admit into the preface of a book of sermons; but to-night it would be a travesty of my true thoughts to set this episode on one side. And, in a sense, it is not so irrelevant; for in Toc H the stillness of death is our profoundest preaching. We learn straightway that a movement which can express itself quite naturally on such a plane of brotherhood is not the trivial thing which some still take it for. Men do not thus behave towards each other in the elaborately organised Societies which wax and wane in accordance with the creature comforts they are able to provide. To watch on one's knees all night, with a hard day's work behind and more work ahead all next day, is not the normal tribute from the usual boarding house on the demise of a fellow-lodger; a wreath and a vote of condolence suggest an easier way of sympathy.

The truth is, that Toc H is still Toc H. It has not shallowed into nothingness, as a Society growing pheno-

menally may do so easily. It is nowhere a mere ritual left high and dry by realities it has failed to plumb. It is from the first a Family in which life at its strongest is running errands for Religion at its best. Here are men of the utmost diversity of outlook and experience all drawn together in an endeavour to contribute the very best they have in them to the healing of those smarting sores which cannot be coerced or conjured into health. We may feel the pulse of a nation's life a thousand times; but only one Name can cast the devils out.

Thus all night long Rex—like Saint Paul—continues preaching to his comrades. They are still on the lower rungs of their careers; some, indeed, have no careers to climb to. The lot of the by-product of quite expensive schools is not fallen on fair ground, when played without much aptitude or interest into a London house of business. No wonder that such find ledgers irksome, when even into the counting-house there steals the whisper of that bee-loud glade in Innisfree. To such as these Rex, their dead friend and companion, is preaching to-night his first and only sermon; and because they liked him, they stay with him still, and hearken with the ear of the spirit. He has heartened them before with brave music, but never with so deft a touch upon their lives as now.

My weary mind goes back twelve years to such another preaching of comrade to comrades. It must have been in July 1915—the July of Hooge—though I was only then beginning to hear that terrible name. I was a late-comer to France, for I had only landed in May; most of my friends were there before me, and many had finished their war. Meanwhile, I had been posted to nothing more hazardous than the Chaplaincy of a General Hospital, No. 16, at Le Treport; where all through the spring a thousand beds had been too few. By the time I came, the doctors and nurses had grown accustomed to the absence of religious provision, and accepted the moratorium in Christianity for the most part with fortitude. The

Colonial analogy is obvious; for a body of new settlers anywhere will dispense with religious observances, if they remain long uncared for. But I have a story to tell, and must not wander on in *Byepath Meadow*.

Next to the great tented camp, there had grown up another, less trim and more grimly serviceable. It was known as the " Con. Camp," one of the earliest of these pathetic places soon after established near every great hospital centre in France. At the Con. Camp all convalescent cases, of those who were not definitely incapacitated for return to their units, were sent for a short period of patching up. They were the " walking wounded" for the most part, or—as was common then—men slightly gassed, or temporarily lamed, or cheapened in some way. With his chart once branded for the Con. Camp, a man well knew that he must go up to the line again and hold his own amongst the depôt drafts, without their interest in the experiences he had already drained to the full. If any place could depress the men, it was this.

In July 1915, it was worse than ever. The lightly gassed went wheezing to it, and when the wheezing was reduced to coughing, they were fit for draft. There was no room to keep men long ; and, when the great rushes were signalled to come upon the hospital, the Con. Camp had also to be cleared in readiness. Moreover, men were desperately scarce; and the melting Roll Calls of their regiments were a summons that must somehow be met.

One Sunday night in July, I went across to the Con. Camp for the late Evening Service, after the Hospital Evensong. It had been a long day, with a series of desperate cases between each time of service. I was tired and—as usual—I took no pains to hide it. As I entered the Con. Camp, I was met by a Corporal Bradbear, R.G.A., whom I had known and loved across in hospital. He had missed a longed-for visit to Blighty by a hairsbreadth. The doctors had voted almost evenly on his case, but it had finally gone against him. At another time, from 1916

onwards, he would have been at home for three months with such a wound. He had taken the verdict without a murmur; and even I, who knew at what anchor he rode, marvelled at his contentment.

As we walked across to the great marquee, I felt more inadequate than ever. Here were these five hundred men, from among whom great drafts would go to-morrow and each day afterwards, back into the maelstrom from which they had already emerged; as a child might push a half-drowned fly back into the bowl, up the side of which it had almost climbed. What could I—who knew no likelihood of danger—say to them? How could I dare to say anything at all? When, as if answering my thoughts, Corporal Bradbear broke in with an offer to take the sermon off my hands! "I'll try it, Padre, if you'll let me. I'm going up to-morrow, and they'll excuse me for that."

I can see the marquee across the gap of twelve years, and even some of the faces under the great oil hurricane lamps. When Bradbear came forward to read, it was from the Acts that he took his lesson. "Peter therefore was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." It would be fanciful to pretend that I could quote his very words, nor do I suppose that of his audience that night more than a handful are now alive to check my memory. Bradbear himself has, I imagine, gone forward, for his letters ceased like so many others in 1917, but I am well assured that of those who heard him that night, not one man forgot. It was an occasion of a kind rare indeed in latter-day history, when a sense of blind and inexorable doom was pierced and shattered by the spirit of one man, himself no less a victim than his audience, yet aglow with an indescribable force of conviction that what the Father does is well.

That matchless touch which St. Paul employed when he speaks of himself as an "ambassador in bonds," rises to its noblest majesty when he adds that the Word of God is not bound. Before us all that night in the twice-

breathed air of the crowded tent, there stood a man transfigured by the same apostolic certainty. Corporal Bradbear was, I think, no practised adept at such exposition. I doubt, indeed, if he had ever before faced a great audience of his fellows; his words came haltingly and without form or style; yet we somehow knew that we were hearing the truth, and that the truth was making us free. His points were infinitely simple—Peter the prisoner, and themselves, by their own deliberate choice and endeavour to do the right thing for the cause they loved, there standing in like case to experience whatever lay before them; the prison wrapped in darkness, and themselves held to the greatest darkness that the world had known since Calvary; Peter supremely conscious that at no great distance the family which God had given him was on its knees in a passion of prayer. Now the great marquee stood not far from the great cliffs of Le Treport, below which beat the great tide-race of the issuing and returning seas, with the summer moon making its silver path across them towards that England which men can only see when invisible, and love when unattainable. There, in a manner undreamed of in the days of plenty and ease, the homes held folk at prayer, and such prayers could not fail. He did not promise bodily safety—it would have been madness to do so; his message was rather the ringing words of his Master, that they should not fear the power which killed the body; he, like his Master, had the right to say this thing. I remember that he emphasized each word that followed:—

". . . without ceasing, by the Church, unto God, for him," and then, after ten minutes perhaps, though none of us could tell what the time had been, he simply stepped down, and I gulped and gave out a hymn.

It would be madness to analyse this memory further. I only know that it will for ever remain with me, and that I look back to it as being far more than a merely moving episode in a surcharged recollection.

Somewhere in a great book on Africa, written by a woman missionary, there is a narrative which Charles Lister used in one of his 1915 letters to describe the final sacrifice of some great Oxford friend. It tells how an old heathen chief came down to die by the shores of the great lake, camping hard by the water—every ripple of which was long familiar to him. The witch doctors of his tribe, and others, were summoned to save him if they might, and came with all their arts and appurtenances. All these availing nothing, he lay with his strength ebbing from him, surrounded by their fruitless instruments of magic. As the last moment came, his anger rose within him, and tottering to his feet and gathering in his hands a bundle of such devil-sticks, he staggered to the water, and flung them far. Turning from this supreme effort, he cried in a great voice to those who crowded behind him, "Now I will be a man and meet my God alone."

To Charles Lister this story was the clue to Julian Grenfell's ultimate character. Small wonder that to me the figure of a Gunner Corporal with the half-light of a hurricane lamp falling fitfully on his square face, his broad-set eyes, and his open Testament, remains and will remain.

II.—THE EMMAUS INNKEEPER

I

He had no thought, that innkeeper, that anything out of the ordinary was toward. Indeed, he had every reason to anticipate a dull and idle afternoon, and the hostelry was so empty that the honest fellow had nothing better to do than to lean up against his doorpost and survey the village street. Last week had been anything but idle, for the road hard by had been one steady cloud of dust as the great folk and the caravans had moved on towards the city. Business had been decidedly brisk, and so it would be again on their return. But meanwhile the village was quieter than ever by contrast.

A stray traveller or two had already come back, with news of the annual festival. All was going well, it appeared, and the political horizon was a great deal clearer. Had he seen the eclipse the day before yesterday; or had it been too local to include the suburbs? Anyhow, it had been an effective background to the executions. Oh! yes.

Of course there had been the usual public spectacle, in that as in other directions. The Raj had countenanced its continuance, with the eleventh-hour reprieve for the popular man. Among the unlucky had been What's-his-name, the prophet; and a fine ending he had made. Queer cattle, a crowd; but the clerical element had been active behind the scenes. Trust the orthodox to give a free-lance a bad name, and hang Him. But at all events, the Viceroy and the Rajah were on good terms again, that was something to the good. National stability and the liquor trade go hand in hand, as anyone but a fool can see; and if prophets must die, innkeepers must live.

So far mine host in his meditations; but his eyes give

him now a further field for conjecture. The road cityward climbs the skyline, and against the evening light the figures of two wayfarers stand clear. Stay! Are there only two? No—a third is now manifest. Well, one foot passenger more or less is a matter of indifference, and in any case they may make no halt so early in their journey; yet, judging from their gait, there is more talk than travel in their minds.

This impression is confirmed as they come nearer. It is plainly the fault of the One who walks between the two. Yet as they come abreast of the inn, He makes as though He would go further. Now it is their turn to urge, and never had so slight a point more fervent pleading. To mine host, the issue is trivial, for there is no blindness like that of the habitual bystander; but to Cleopas and his friend the Stranger's decision is all in all. Their minds are at fever heat, and their instincts aflame against the thought of separation.

Disciples only, and not of the apostolic calibre, they were insignificant and irresponsible perhaps in their contribution to the Christian commune, sitting loosely to the main regime. When the storm had burst and the end had come, there was enough loyalty in them to take them once more to the house of meeting, and thither they had gone that morning. But there was nothing to keep them there. It was all so hopeless without Him; the atmosphere was close and uninspiring. The seniors had nothing to suggest. The women were overwrought and hysterical; especially one group who spoke of angels at daybreak. Women are notoriously lacking in the laws of evidence, and to such minds even crucifixion itself is not a convincing finale! In short, sleeplessness and sorrow had done their work, and the fact of fear—hitherto unknown—had barred the ever-open doors. The tigers had tasted blood, and every face was scanned for the next informer.

No place this sheltered room, with its shadows and shuddering, for the junior members of the movement, if movement still it were. The nerves of youth react against a passive attitude of despair, and can meet more than they can wait for. Cleopas signs to his companion, and they leave the room, as they had come, together. Skirting the main streets, they make for another gate than that by which He had passed out to die. They emerge unchallenged on the open road. Now they can talk freely, but there is little enough to say, for hope they have none to share, and memory leads only to the same abyss.

Two and two He had sent them once before; but not such hangdog gospellers. What is their message now? Beware the Fatherhood of God. Beware the Brotherhood of man. For God and man have nought in common save an infinite capacity for ingratitude. Even the flowers and the birds are mocking Him by their new life, while He lies dead. Who then is this who has overtaken them? When two are such sad company a third is welcome, whoever he may be. He invites their confidence, and there is that in His manner which acquits them of precaution.

2

Grief makes men slow of foot, but good news mends their pace. Therefore, after the stranger had overtaken them, Emmaus was soon in sight. Meanwhile, their tragedy had been told anew, and He remembering Simon of Cyrene, lifted their cross from them. True that at first He appeared ill-equipped for their consolation, since of Jesus He had never heard. This ignorance was shocking to them; so small, they bitterly reflected is the circle of our Master's fame, so transient the ripples on the vast sea of the world's concern. Persecutions are generally successful, and (saving the Stranger's presence) they would admit the final defeat of their cause, the utter overthrow of

their hopes. For them the Divine idyll was dead indeed.

He, however, was not of the stuff that tolerates a verdict of despair. Well provided, moreover, with that which above all else carried conviction to the Jewish mind, He was a scholar of their sacred law, and had read to some purpose Moses and the Prophets. All true achievement is through suffering, and the Cross was but a signpost pointing Heaven's Son to Glory. Usurpers may wade through slaughter to a throne, but in the end it is still not their's. By right, both by birth and of purchase, His throne is doubly His, and the Gates of Mercy do not close behind Him.

Ere this, the three are in the village street, abreast the Inn. They hesitate, but the Stranger does not pause. Not to go forward is foreign to His nature, and for the rest He will not thrust Himself upon them. There is always this tender pride in Him. But the sincerity of their tone is unmistakable, and He is content to suffer their loving will. They enter, therefore, and the host sets humble fare before them, bread, olives and coarse country wine.

They are not such as should be waited on, and soon are left to serve themselves.

After a pause, the Stranger rises to ask a blessing, and as He does so, there is that in His aspect which is unaccountably familiar. Hastily, they exchange glances, and then their gaze is back upon Him. Now, in hands hitherto unobserved, He is lifting up the Bread. With growing awe they remark that the strong hands are scarred. Now there is in their ears the murmur of those words, already more sacred than any in the history of man, but the Voice is no longer from visible lips. The hands are gone; the Bread lies warm and broken; they kneel as they consume it, and

as they do so, they come to know that He has not passed from them, but within them.

At last they rise, pay their reckoning, and find themselves upon the road again. The road is the same, dusty and toilsome as before, but they are not the same, for in the flash of recognition, life has become a lucid story. Their task is clear, and they turn back, with faces set towards Jerusalem. There will be lions in the way, but the Lion of the Tribe of Judah has already overcome.

3

Living as I now do as the foster-father of an ever-growing family, anarchic in its temperament since adolescent in its outlook, I should need to be blind and deaf at once were I to remain unaware that the Emmaus process was never more needed than now. What is this Emmaus process? It is that by which the living Christ makes himself manifest to those who in the splendid intolerance of youth cannot rest content with any gathering, however devoted, which has lost the conviction of His presence.

When Cleopas and his friend, on that first Sunday morning, made a point of calling upon the Christian family, they climbed the crazy stairs, in the great hope that no other voice but His would bid them enter. No hope is so unlikely of fulfilment but that the mind of youth can entertain it; and while in the sequence of men's building the stern, strong, low-browed arch precedes the high and fretted vault, in the growing of men's minds it is middle age that is so sombre and tenacious; it is youth that airily aspires.

Cleopas and his companion knocked but no welcoming voice replied. There was only a silence as of fear within. They made to enter; but the once hospitable door was

barred. When, at last, they were admitted, they wished they had never come, for they found only groups of senior persons absorbed in their own grave concerns, preoccupied in the uninspiring occupation of self-pity.

God forbid that the parallel should be pressed too far, but there are churches on more recent Sunday mornings that have an atmosphere not dissimilar. What of one young friend of mine who went last Sunday to his Communion at a fashionable church, and (abashed to find himself apparently the only man under thirty there) made for an empty pew. In the half-light, dim, rather than religious, he tripped over a substantial silken cord, and found as he righted himself (no easy process with an empty sleeve), a sidesman whispering that the pew was rented. What of the twos and threes who (and it is pardonable in those so eager) go hopefully to that or this church in this or that neighbourhood, survive this or that service, and come sadly home. Oh I know they should have gone to St. Blank, whose praise is in the Gospel! There they would have found Christ risen, indeed; but candidly it is otherwise at St. Grudgeabones, and St. Blank is one among many.

So out of the little chapel they burst, as Browning did before them, and find themselves thrust upon the windy and open spaces of the world of life. They attempt to defeat disillusionment by the search for another Cause, as compelling as that which they think they have left behind. Without a Cause to serve, a lifelong owing to be truly paid, a high ideal to pursue, a point to make for (even be that point merely an inn parlour), it is all up with Cleopas and his kind. Set his feet on any road and he will follow it through. He will talk as he goes, and argue; it is the nature of the animal. Despair is hostile to his being, and it can make no lodgment in his mind without much protest. Hence come your Arthur Cloughs and many

more, to whom salvation is nearer than when they believed, as yesternight led on to dawn.

Yes, and in that dawn He had come again. The world did not then and does not now believe it and, indeed, it is no small wonder that it is so with the world, for the purpose of His rising was not the stupefaction of the many, but the strengthening of the few. Therefore, the world saw Jesus finally on the Cross, and from that day to this it has tried pitifully hard to forget the spectacle and to have done with it for ever. But in this the world cannot succeed, for it harbours, however reluctantly, an unending line of those who know the truth. This series of witnesses, dispersed through every race and age, constitute an unbroken chain —convinced, sincere—who would have told us if it were not so.

First, in the dawn He rose again to set Love smiling through its tears, and sent it on an errand through the dark to Penitence. Penitence was found being comforted in vain, and Faith came more quickly of the two to draw his own conclusion, where the eyes of Penitence were less observant.

These satisfied, whither then goes Christ? To Church? Not yet awhile; for youth is afoot, and youth afoot in search of what to live for must be accompanied and convinced; and youth itself shall call a halt in progress, and weary of its quest, while His feet are still ready to go on. There is no true Cause which does not beckon Him more urgently than it commands the most self-dedicated enthusiast alive. There is no adventure from which He (who is at the end of all adventures) will willingly turn aside. He, therefore, would lead on; but youth, whose gift for forward movement is limited, is yet wise enough to know the marching worth of its companion.

Then comes the simplest form of fellowship, and with it light in a blinding glory, joy in a surging tide; a sudden

recollectedness; an instant recall to duty. As they go back, the dark comes out to meet them, and with it, the murmurs of the multitude, who turned on Him and slew Him: but the slain is slain no longer. Once more the stairs lead to the Meeting-place. Yet for all their haste, He is there before them.

So, Cleopas, these things shall be again in your lifetime and perhaps in mine; but that they shall be is certain, for Christ is risen indeed. If you can't stay where we that are older must needs await Him, get you out on the great high-road. Take at least your highmindedness with you, and a friend to bear with you in all your humours. The world is luckily round, and when you think yourself farthest off be mindful that it is never more than one Sabbath's day's journey home.

Go what pace you may on the straight, white, open road, and He will yet outpace you. Argue to the top of your bent, but He will win your ear. Don't delay your coming back when once you know He lives and needs you; and when at last you come home bringing your triumphant experience, remember that the elders may have had theirs as well.

III.—THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY

Go thy way, thy son liveth.—St. John iv. 50.

I AM going to share a problem with you, and submit something towards a solution. Yesterday a gunner came in to see me on his way on special leave. I knew and liked him well last year, and it was obvious from the first that he was not looking forward to getting home this time, for Norman, his younger brother, aged 18, (Cecil is 20), who had arrived home a fortnight ago on leave from R.N.V.R., had been taken ill, and died suddenly of pneumonia. Cecil was now going home to stand by his father and mother in their grief. He had heard from his father, and in the letter there had been depths unknown before. Especially, the father felt, what it is so hard to tell a son, remorse that he had not brought both boys up more strictly. Not that anything had gone badly wrong. It had simply been left to them both to find their own way to God. Cecil, on active service, in one great week had found it, being baptised, confirmed, coming to his first communion, and joining the C.E.M.S. Padres know (thank God) that his plunge is not so rare as it sounds. But Norman? He had enjoyed what services he had been to voluntarily, but no more than that. And now the father, himself in like condition, appealed to Cecil: "Is there any certainty that I shall meet Norman again?" What answer was Cecil to take home with him?

What answer shall we take home, if home we go, to like questions? Don't we all know some family we shall be ashamed to see, certain sad folk we shall rather hold back from visiting? It may be our own home that is bright because we come, yet sorrowful because we come alone. Or at least to us all there is that other house,

where we were adopted sons, which now we dread to enter.

Last week the mother of my oldest friend, who was killed over Bruges, wrote: "At least I am now glad for the first time to be growing old." Shall we dare to say to such as these: *Go thy way, thy son liveth?* Yet it is what most of us who have seen much of death honestly believe, whether we are Christians in other respects or not. The startling incompleteness of careers so full of real life points steadily to no other answer; and we are guided in the same direction not by the twilight of sentiment, but by the cold light of logic. These young energies cannot be wasted, these characters that influenced ours so profoundly cannot be obliterated.

Sometimes, even in Flanders, a touch of fresh air comes our way. It leaves us but it goes forward to others. We should be fools to think it came to none but us, or died away when it had passed us by. *The wind bloweth where it listeth. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* It is simply a crass confusion of thought that obsesses our minds. We have shaken ourselves free of other conventions; let us shake ourselves for ever free of this vulgarism, that death and destruction are identical. Physical death we should know something about by now. We know, for instance, that it is often most hideous when most merciful. It is also most powerless to harm when most ostentatious; most futile, when most vehement and unnatural.

Out there it is an end; but of what? Of hardship, mischance, and misery. "Anyhow, Bill, you'll have a better night than we shall," said a man in the line, dazed with the nightmare of it all, to a friend's dead body on a stretcher at sundown. *Fear not them that kill the body*, said Jesus, who had a right to say it. Physical death was to Him only a symbol of real death, as mere physical life was an emblem only of life true and eternal. Physical

death He found to taste bitter; but the poisons are mostly sweet. And at Gethsemane He drained this bitterness; but at Calvary He poured away the poison.

We must, therefore, cling with every particle of conviction we possess to the distinction He laboured both by word and example to make plain. Physical death, as Erewhon says, is "more a question of being frightened than being hurt." Whatever may be good in us or noble comes from a source immune from death, and is utterly beyond its reach. I remember in 1915 going with some others, after a month beyond the pale of civilisation, to Bailleul. When we reached it, we made our way into the church and some unseen musician was at the great organ. Neither church nor organ stands to-day. Yet it is quite possible the player still lives (he deserves to, whoever he was). Which thing is an allegory.

We must also be quite decided, if we are going to have the courage to visit our friends' homes as they could wish, that we do not preach resignation. Neither the war, nor their loss, was God's will. In our souls we know that to be true and we must hold it, however little we can square it with conventional doctrine.

Hear the words of Jesus: *Some enemy hath done this; it is not My Father's will that any of these should perish.* Yet they have died, none the less. But perished, no! Trust God for that. If, therefore, we would meet grief in others we must be sincere in our convictions, for grief is a mood most discerning of hypocrisy. "My dear lady," said one of the most spiritual men in England to the wife of a regular officer killed at the first Marne, "don't think for a moment it was God's will, because it wasn't. Whereupon she broke down at last, and said: "Oh, thank you, thank you!"

Lay stress continually, in your own mind and in theirs, on the conviction which they experience that love still passes and repasses between them, across the gap. Eye-

sight indeed fails, as mine fails to see you when I take off my glasses, thus—; but relationship, yes and a certain sense of proximity, remain. If he *were not* he could be no longer loved; for love is the keenest of our perceptions to detect a lack of reciprocity. There may be many mixed calls on the lines, but love always gets through.

As for prayers for the dead, they are a natural channel of love; and we may feel in spiritual moments the reciprocity here as well. The rising tide of the world's sorrow has burst with one heave those old lawyer-made barriers of a mere negation. It goes without saying that such prayers may be (like others) foolish in what they ask. So, often, are our letters home, but the A.P.O. carries them with a fine catholicity, irrespective of our epistolary style.

We must, then, be prepared to say to these sad hearts at home, with the tense energy that can compel their minds to receive: *Go thy way, thy son liveth.* "Ah!" they will say, "if we could only believe it. But at best we can only think he sleeps till that misty, far-off day." Surely not. It were false to his character so. Norman, Cecil tells me, was never one for much rest. He loved activity for its own sake, and was doing something all his eighteen years. What are our best friends doing now? Surely, what they did here, when they brought out all the good in us and made us at our best when with them. Over there, when you wake up, the first thing you find is that God is true after all. Most men are startled to find it so; and have in consequence much leeway in learning to make up. Who will help them to know God? Not some stranger, surely. "Why, here's old Harry; how splendid; the very man. He knew it all and lived by it in the battalion; we didn't listen to him then, but now, thank God, he's come to us."

Years ago, before the war, one brilliant Oxford man, with a great political future had he not renounced it, threw up his career to cross the London bridges, and to live where the ignorance was blackest and the need greatest. Thence-

forth his old friends spoke of him as " poor X," but he was now richer far than they. God did not make the hideous and congested district to which he went, nor did God force his going: there was good work to be done on both sides of the river; but God honoured and blessed the choice that took that man across the bridges, for it was the way of most cost to him; and an outlay of sacrifice buys what is else unpurchaseable—love. And those who remained on the other bank learned to be without him, for the thought of what his life was carrying to others.

So, to-night, here in this old chapel, the spiritual centre for three years of the old salient now finally freed, between us and those who have freed it there lies that great belt of desolation we know only too well. It is hideous still, but full of fear no longer; for those who have at last broken the ring of death are far beyond it now: out of our sight, because victorious; vanished, because advancing. Desolation, it is true, divides us but neither we nor they are desolate. We go on our way here for the time, happy for the knowledge that their feet, as they go forward, are on ever firmer ground.

This is the last and only recorded address given in the Upper Room of Talbot House in Poperinghe. Its date was 21st Sunday after Trinity 1918, i.e., *during the final advance.*

IV.—THE HOPE FOR TO-MORROW

I MUST surely throw myself on your mercy; and while the quality of mercy is not strained upon the Rialto, it is subjected to a very great strain by third speakers at a Church Congress. Two visions, and one nightmare!

The fact is that I didn't get Canon Holland's paper till late on Monday, and that in any case I love a pen and hate a platform. So it is as if Mr. Valiant and Mr. Greatheart had been discoursing and poor little Ignorance were summoned to sum up. What is really wanted now is one of those elaborated impromptus which flourished in my day at the Union, and bore sad fruits later in the Schools.

Father Valiant-for-Truth showed us "a right Jerusalem blade." (It is no good listening to me if you will not read Bunyan.) It was worth coming for that alone. That Self-will is *the* enemy is a truth shared by most religions. At the Imperial Institute on Monday, Nanak, the Sikh, was quoted as saying that "of the various sins which man commits, none is equal to selfishness." But Nanak, the Sikh, had no cure to propose. He had nothing to pit against this universal plague, and this world lay round him dying in the wilderness of sin. Father Vernon points to the Cross set up as the one ensign to which mankind must look if they would live.

The truth is that to-day Our Lord has become a jealous Lord again. He would have all men know that any lesser symbol cannot heal them. There is only one token that does not break under our dependence. There is only One Figure that can support our reliance. There is only One Name wherein all men may be saved. There is only One Atonement that can take away our sins. There is only One Food that can sustain our souls. There is only One

Heart that can bear our sorrows. There is only One Hand that can wipe away our tears. There is only One Life that can set our hearts at liberty. I am reminded of that great passage, I think from Heine, where all the gods of lust and wrong are seated at their banquet, throned and triumphant over the world; when suddenly there enters against them, one peasant staggering under His Cross. He casts it thundering on their table, and all the gods of wrong despair and die.

Then Canon "Greatheart" came and swept us with his splendid hope. Long years ago, I heard B. K. Cunningham give the humble lineage of that great virtue. Hope was, when Our Lord found it, a child-word in the gutter. The noble-minded passed it by contemptuously. But Our Lord looked upon it and loved it. He raised it, converted it, baptised it, and set it in His crown of crowns. Hope shrivels without God. On the occasion of Mr. Gladstone's last visit to Oxford, he is said to have sat in the Senior Common Room at Christ Church, and discoursed at large upon the happy changes he had seen come true in the lot of the English people. His outlook was so radiant, that it aroused a challenge. "Are we to understand, sir," said one, "that you have no anxieties for the future of the race? Are there no adverse signs?" The old man answered slowly. "There is, indeed, one thing which frightens me: the fear of God seems to be dying out of the minds of men."

Mark you, not the mere belief in God and assent to His existence. There are few signs of theoretic Atheism today. Few say "Nehushtan" now. If you gathered all the Atheists from among those youngsters who will soon be flooding these autumn streets of Oxford, I doubt whether you would get a quorum. If organised religion is at a discount, there are not enough young Atheists to organise. "The Creed of the Christian," said a French wit, "is three Persons and one God. Abolish God, and you'll scarcely get three persons together."

No; the danger of our age is not from the Atheist, who says, "there is no Mount Sion." The peril to-day is Mr. Flatterer, who shows us a road far wider and withal well-laid. I should like to have Bunyan's comments on the collapse, last Sunday, of that appetising arterial route just opened between Bristol and Avonmouth. It has slipped with a splosh into the river; but the poor old road it superseded still runs, and dips and climbs. Do not despair at its alarming gradients. A road must rise and fall, if the countryside is English. The old Church road must have its ups and downs; and sometimes our downs, as in Sussex, are our highest altitudes. On the road to Sion hindrances are milestones, and stony hearts are broken to mend the way.

You have had two great visions to-night. Now take a worm's eye view. (The most famous faculty of a worm is highly Christian—a worm knows how to turn.)

I see this new age hopefully, but do not yet expect too much from its preliminary performances. It is a child, equipped as never was child before with toys, utensils, and contrivances. These things do not impress me. It knows a lot about life; but still, not how to live it. It is a child, comforted (after a fright) with a great gift of new play-things, some of which are wholesome, some patently inedible. In the intervals, between stomach-aches, it stuffs itself without discretion. Wireless does not augment our wisdom; and avaricious cities re-built on an earthquake crust shriek when the thing goes off, and curse God quaintly for the consequences.

The old Church is the world's wise nurse, divinely charged with patience, pluck and prayer. It must slap the world and shake it, and sometimes say "Well done." Above all, the Church must teach each age to pray, and the great Church itself must intercede for that tiny tot—the universe. We cannot blame it for going wrong if we do not pray for it; and we cannot teach prayer unless we pray for our pupils.

First, the Church must teach Europe to pray about its future. A League of the Lord's Prayer would have settled Europe long ago. The Lord's Prayer, for instance, is very clear on the nature of Reparations. Hatred cannot be satiated by harming its victim. Every injustice adds to the ill-will which prompts it. But so reactive is conduct upon motive, that a kindness done by an angry man or nation induces a return of love; and to-day and to-morrow, every good deed done in England, Egypt, India, Ireland, counts and re-echoes.

Secondly. the Church must teach England to pray about England. Probably not ten per cent. of our population say any regular prayers. Some Church people do not. England may now have a curious destiny in store; quite different to that intended by any school of economics. Already we are exporting more ideals than coal or cotton goods. We are like to become far less prosperous, and far more charitable; a martyr nation rather than a mart.

Thirdly, the Church must teach industry and commerce to say prayers together. Our task is not to rule and divide, not to take sides, but to teach both sides to pray for the common whole. We must find somehow a vantage point in each large industry from which prayer can be made an intelligent factor in its well-being. The trouble is that dividend-warrants are unaccompanied by intercession papers; and the growth of great concerns has eliminated the old habit of prayer by the master for his men, which, in the days of William Law, was part of the indisputable duty of a merchant. The unclean spirit in industry waits to be driven out by prayer, for prayer is " the onlie begetter " of conciliation and goodwill. I know of two great industries, side by side, in one of which there is still daily prayer for all who wish to come, as many do. It is a business that has never suffered from internal war. Over against it is another huge concern, for which no one would dream of praying. It has been a storm centre of

discord and disputes unendingly. The contrast is amazing; for where prayer is, love is and understanding.

Fourthly, we must pray for Society, for happy human homes and relationships. Our Social state, as it stands, was neither born nor made. It has just slipped down from nowhere. It is, as God sees it, a wee bit of His wayward family tired out and cross and well-nigh tearful. Well, let it cry! A good cry will do it good. The National Mission washed our eyes, where it happened; and we can see a bit better since then. We are all just God's children feeling lost in the Hampton Court Maze. But the maze is near the palace all the same; and, after all, a maze is only a royal children's avenue, rolled up and gone to sleep. Therefore, I feel hopeful about the future for many reasons.

(1) We shall none of us be here to stop it happening. An age of sub-committees can scarcely be an age of miracles.

(2) There is some very good vintage from these last few years, some greatish men maturing, and quite a lot of good ones. "Will they be Christian?" "How can we keep our young men?" The question has a quiet humour, when we take it to the light of the Gospel, which is all about young men led by One as young as they. I hear that you have been listening to rebels. Up, the rebels, by all means. But rebels always remind me of a boy who came to see me in 1916, and said, "I don't mind the war, but I can't stick the Army." And a few days later, a regular came to me and said, "When shall we get over this horrible war and get back to real soldiering?" So a Church that is fighting manfully against evil and sorrow will hold its men; but the best men will not turn out merely for mimic warfare.

(3) In any case, this age could not fail to do exploits. You remember the answer to St. Monica: "A child of so many prayers and tears cannot be lost."

This age is being prayed for as none other that has gone

before it. Prayers for the dead may or may not be legal, but no court can forbid the Dead to pray for us men and for our Salvation. The curious feature of the last war was that Englishmen died in thousands for an idea. In wars before they died for old England; this time they died for a new England, a new Europe, a new World.

Now death is a retirement from the impotent activities of affairs into a life of intercession. When I read in *The Times* the admirable suggestion of a House of Youth (without executive powers, of course !) as an annexe to the Assembly, I felt the thing had already been done by God. Our friends beyond are now God's House of Youth, of all nations, our wise advisers and saintly intercessors, praying for the world, as the world has never been prayed for before, influencing it for good as no monks or priests before them. They are not only our treasure laid up in heaven to draw our hearts thitherward from the pettiness of our pavements; they are our unwearying bedesmen, where Jesus Himself leads the worship of the Father. We old folks may misunderstand the younger men. But these know them through and through. Therefore, the age is singularly hopeful, since it has bedesmen who are ever young.

When I came from Paddington to-night, I got into a carriage just opposite what I think is the one good statue of the war. It is the statue of the man who there, among the bustling multitudes, stands gigantic, immense, and terrifying. There on that great heap of Flanders mud his huge limbs stretch out as in his hand he clutches—not any weapon—but a letter from home. As I sat in the carriage it seemed to me that it was as if that great coat which was hung about him had turned into some kind of priestly vestment, the missive into a missal, and his firm hands were lifted up in prayer.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

V.—TWO MEN'S WORK—YOUNGER BROTHERS OF TO-DAY

When you pass men in the street, you notice (if anything at all) whether they look prosperous or shabby. This, however, is only a first impression, and as your knowledge grows, your interest shifts from their condition to their character. In the larger letters, it is the same with the aspect of a nation. Its economic condition, whether prosperous or depressed, is no great matter in comparison with its deeper life. Its soul's health, the spirit of the people, is the ultimate standard of its credit, when all is said and done. There are other forms of bankruptcy more sinister than those which wait upon an inflation of prices and a pouring out of paper money. The price of war is not bounded by a subsequent war of prices. These things are symptoms of ill-health, but the malady itself lies deeper. A loss of balance, of discipline, of traditions, of ideals, and, above all, of willing minds to sustain them, is bankruptcy indeed, from which a heedless and spendthrift nation can find no discharge.

As Armistice time again approaches, our deprivation becomes more desperately plain. War claims not only life, not only young life, but—as we waged it—the best young life. Those that had most to give to this post-war world, gave it to the world at war. In the south it is noticeable enough. There was never such a dearth of the younger man with the sheepdog spirit as there is to-day. Club work, settlements, schools, scouts, after-care committees are crying out in vain for voluntary service. The men who have it have gone forward to their task, if task it be, beyond. As for Scotland, they say it is stripped bare of young men and old trees. Take in an aggregate the

tale of personal bereavements, and the sum of the whole is such that all other costs than this are trivial.

When in the war a battalion was cut up, the hopes of the survivors were focussed on the reinforcements. The past mattered terribly, but the future mattered most, and the future lay evenly between the survivors and the drafts. The spirit they brought with them, and the tradition which they found, decided in advance whether the failure could be retrieved or the success consolidated. It is not otherwise with us to-day. The rising generation is always of supreme value in the eyes of a far-seeing people; but to-day its contribution may well prove decisive: and the measure of our folly is that we are slow to tell them so; for, rightly told, the solemnity of the thought will not fail to weigh with minds which are already deepened by the early propinquity of sorrow. Once let the younger brother know that there lies upon him not one man's work but two, and sonship and services will be rendered with a diligence that will know no rein.

Among the multifarious ex-Service movements, there is perhaps only one that has attempted to reduce such aims to illustrative methods of working.

When Gilbert Talbot died at Hooge, there fell one who might well have been by now within the wide confines of Cabinet rank. His name was commemorated in Talbot House, which for three years afterwards stood as a magic inn at the heart of the Ypres Salient. Alone among ex-Service clubs to-day, it had its birth far back in the furnace, before the fires grew cold; and now in its free and rapid growth, both in London and up and down the country, the promise of the latter House is exceeding the glory of the former. Socially it faces foursquare to all points of the compass; and this is surely as it should be, when we remember that the pit-boys of to-day cherish an almost racial antagonism against the classes whose sons led the pit-boys of yesterday against uncut wire. Beneath the redemptive memory of their common loss, these mutual ignorances

must surely cease. If, then, the Talbot House movement, which has a foot in both camps, can go forward with its programme of reconciliation between those whose prejudices are not yet ingrained, much good may come of it. For while it is natural for the young to quarrel with the old, it is, indeed, intolerable that youth of to-day should not be at unity in itself. How else will the younger brother on both sides be able to brace himself to do two men's work—his brother's and his own ?

VI.—LOVE AND DUTY

If ye love me, keep my commandments.—John xiv. 15

Simplest of all Texts, so simple that it seems hardly to be suitable for a text.

There is nothing to explain. It is the nursery lesson, when a child that has been naughty, and is not sorry, comes trying it on with mother by a kiss—and she says, "No, I don't care for kisses when my child goes wilfully doing what it knows I forbid and hate." It is the same all through where sentiment is offered instead of genuine loyalty. Not least so in religion. It is perhaps particularly English in the form—"I won't pretend to be religious, when I am living as religion forbids."

But I take the text because I seem to see a special meaning which it has for us of to-day.

I have been reading lately a little book of addresses given to young women in what we call the upper walks of life. The writer or preacher is profoundly distressed by his look-out on the social life of to-day—on its craze for pleasure, on its contempt of restraints, and eagerness for "self expression" in defiance of modesty. How does he meet it? Not first by appealing for self-restraint or by a challenge to a stricter ways and so forth. Such things, he thinks, will be swept aside as old-fashioned or stuffy (a favourite word to-day), with no "draw" or appeal about them.

No! he thinks there is a more constraining and effectual way. He knows that the young are out for happiness: he knows that they are surrounded by things that carry the name of love. And he challenges them in the name of happiness, and in the name of love to give themselves to Jesus Christ. He Alone will secure them true happiness;

He alone can claim their love by His own love for them. This is His appeal. He speaks to the young generation in the key which is familiar to them. It is so, is it not? Look back a generation or two. A well-known headmaster of Eton in the twenties flogged a list of boys I believe, daily. A leading headmaster of to-day tells us that he only flogged two boys in the last two years. That is the difference of method. Beat the bad out of them or win the good out of them. Which is the best, which does its work best?

But there is plenty of evidence of the change. Pick up on a street bookstall an old book once popular, *The Fairchild Family*; it will give you a measure of the change by its picture of the old rigid domestic rule, its stern compelling piety. But speaking as an old man to you to-day, I can bear my own witness of this change. We did things when I was a boy largely in obedience to order and custom and rule and the ways of our elders, not I hope altogether, but a good deal for that reason. I don't regret a bit of it. We had our likes and dislikes, of course. We liked a good sermon and disliked a dull one. But either way, unless we had broken loose, we went to Church. It was the thing to do, as I fear it is not, for the most part, the thing to do to-day.

But we can go deeper. If you were to go into the theology of the nineteenth century—or its early part—and compare it with what is more familiar to you, you would be astonished at the difference. There was then so much more of law than liberty, of severity than gentleness, of warnings than of encouragement. In fact, so much is this so, that we feel uncomfortable in thinking or speaking of the severer words of Our Lord Himself. We are inclined to pass them by. Some preachers say that he did not say them, but that is a poor and misleading way. We hear to-day no more of hell fire or brimstone sermons, and we are thankful for it: but with the removal of the bitter husk has the kernel of truth gone too?

Or come—and I want you specially to observe this—

come to the central truths of our faith, come to the preaching of the Cross and Passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The difference here between past and present teaching is marked. Before, it was pointed to as showing the nature of sin and the punishment due to it measured by the cost of the awful remedy. Now it is far more pointed to as declaring the amazing Love of God set forth in the love human and Divine of that loving, willing, unselfish patient sufferer, the moving uttermost of love.

Do not let me mislead you. It is not a question of opposite teachings; it is not that one thing was the explanation given then, and is replaced by another contradictory to it now. The severity and love are, and were, both believed and preached and both are true. It is a question of stress and of preparation, a question of emphasis. At one time or another one part or another is more put forward and more welcomed, and we may dare to say which is the highest. No one can read St. Paul in his great Charity Chapter, or St. John in his Epistle, or the Lord Himself, and doubt that Love is first and greatest, deepest and most beautiful and strongest, therefore, it appeals most.

I have never forgotten how an American lady told me this story. Returning one day from an absence her assistant told her that they had got in a prisoner, a woman, so savage and hard that they begged her not to go into the cell that night. She went in, and the fierce woman glared at her. She said "Good-night, I will come again in the morning, pray with me that I may help you." The next morning she found a different woman, changed, subdued: "That you should care to ask for prayer for one like me." That had touched her to the quick, it was the touch of love. That touch of love and trust had made the difference, and it was a lasting difference, for that woman became one of her best fellow-workers.

And so I think that preacher was right who rested the

whole strength of his appeal to the young generation of to-day upon the power and beauty of love.

Only there are two things to remember. One he said himself most powerfully, the other I will try to say before I end. And the two are really the same, or at least they fit together as one.

The first is this. That Love, however wonderful and attractive it is, winning and not forbidding, is yet, if we are honest about it, a stern and exacting thing. How can it help being so, when the loudest and most penetrating voice with which it speaks comes from the Cross of Calvary, and the highest example of it is He who hung there, and calls others to follow Him with their Crosses, light or heavy.

Then this is the other thing. The appeal of Love is highest, but it is not alone. There is another appeal (though the two run into one another at last), it is the appeal of Duty. Nelson, of course, immortalized it for us of this land when he ran up the signal "England expects every man to do his duty." Wordsworth lifted it high for us in his Ode to Duty, almost too familiar to quote, but too exactly to the point to omit :—

> Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
> O Duty! if that name thou love
> Who art a light to guide, a rod
> To check the erring, and reprove;
> Thou, who art victory and law
> When empty terrors overawe;

And then see how understanding the poet is both in sympathy and in warning of its dangers from all sides :

> There are who ask not if thine eye
> Be on them; who, in love and truth,
> Where no misgiving is, rely
> Upon the genial sense of youth:
> . . . . . .

Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power!
around them cast.

But surely we need not go back to Nelson's signal, or Wordsworth's song, we who have had the appeal of duty, the call to service, met and illustrated by thousands of ungrudged and willing sacrifices in the life and death which Armistice Week calls us to remember and revere. In those years it was duty everywhere, service everywhere; and the appeal was met cheerfully by so many men and women who went for duty and not for sentiment. No doubt love of England and of liberty wove itself in with duty to the right. Love and Duty can never to me be altogether apart. The khaki of war, the working-clothes of peace, are, if rightly seen, the drab-wear of that, which at the heart of it, is Love, love of what is best and most beautiful and most right in God's creature manhood, Love of the Eternal Goodness revealed in its spiritual magnetism by Jesus Christ. And so it is his own word :

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Love, with its splendid freedom, will never abolish duty, but will employ, explain, transfigure and gladden it. So I would, if I could, appeal to the youth of England, in remembrance of the noble dead, to lay fresh hold of the great pair, Love and Duty. Love in all its freedom. Duty in all its plain and honest self-control.

VII.—TOC H AND SERVICE

Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.—Gen. xliii. 5.

These words were spoken by a prince to suppliants come from a foreign, famine-burdened land in search of food. The men who heard them thought they were words of warning, being the words of a prince, when, in truth, they were spoken in love by a brother. Such indeed was this prince. They summarize the whole long story of Joseph and his brethren; but they also summarize the whole wide meaning and method of life. We may forget that Joseph said them. We may forget that they refer to a certain boy named Benjamin who lived long centuries ago. We may take them instead as the inspired word of God Himself; they are so like the Man of Galilee, who was and is the Word of God. He said the same thing in other ways so many times :

Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

Thus truly are they the words of a Prince. But they are also words spoken in love by a brother. They tell anew the law of love that is behind all creation.

It is one of the sad things of life that love, as the solvent of all its problems, is not recognized or trusted in. The world seeks every end but that simple one of standing some day before the face of the Prince holding a brother by the hand. It seeks what it calls national honour when it means some kind of advantage. It pleads personal liberty when, in treading that path, it is willing to see the weaker ones for whom Christ died strewn along the way, lying there in the intolerable slavery of what the stronger would themselves enjoy. It lets race and colour and creed blind it to the meaning of brotherhood. It says here and

there and thus far—but no farther !—shall love and kindness and intercourse proceed. Beyond that it is not prudent or permitted to go.

Yet, all the while, there stands above this strain and struggle after meaner things One who speaks ever so differently. Why aim at things that in God's ultimate working cannot be ? Why think to build a tower from which to see the beauties of the earth and the sky when, in reality, because built for thyself alone, it only lifts thee from thy brothers ?

Ye cannot see the glories of the world except your brother be with you.

Ye cannot find life nor Me but with Him and through Him.

Ye must come the whole long way together, nor ever hold, content, what is denied to any man.

> Not what we give, but what we share,—
> For the gift, without the giver is bare ;
> Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
> Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.[1]

If this be the mind of Christ, it is strange that the religion that bears His name could ever have been conceived as anything but a grand adventure, a call to be dangerously unselfish. Yet for long centuries its note has been in a plaintive minor, and anything but a trumpet-call to adventure. It has been a search for safety, a call of fear, an effort after consolation. It has made God's world a black thing and an evil. It has called men to flee the world in the mockery of following a Man who walked through it with conquering love. It has arrayed itself against creative thought, and the daring of the poet's art, to be a timid and a contrary thing. It has taken God out of life and the vital processes of it to make Him an ecclesiastical person and a departmental head.

[1] James Russell Lowell, *The Vision of Sir Launfal.*

But the Church and the world are at the turn of a wonderful new tide that is to call the world back to a God of love, a tide that is to change the dominant note of Christianity from consolation to courage, and to revive that adventurous spirit which makes men scorn the way of safety, so that God's will—the will of the God of love—be done. His Kingdom is to be the rallying cry once more. And the salvation of that Kingdom is to be one that none can have until all have it together. Its vision, kept alive and vivid, is to be the creative force for social activity and the spiritual power of philanthropic effort. No longer will a man be a Christian out of fear. No longer will he cringe for safety, but laugh aloud in the confidence of the Christ and His victory. No longer will he dally in his pilgrimage to watch for mud underfoot, but see with radiant eyes the golden fields along the way and the blue haze of the hills ahead. For he must love and work and sing, and do the hard things that all must do who build ever bravely towards a City of God wherein all men shall dwell.

The problem is essentially one of seeing that City as a dwelling-place for all men, not for the few who conform to a theological and metaphysical statement about it. For somewhere, somehow, men must come to a realization of the values it symbolizes. To say when or where or in what manner that realization must take place is impossible, even for the Church. The Church is here to bear witness that the way to the City of God is the way of unselfish service one to another. Serve thy brother unselfishly in some vision of what that brother's life has the power to become and thou shalt learn to love. Love and thou shalt learn to pray. And praying thou shalt know thy Father, God. And there, in the face of God, will be mirrored the meaning of the whole of life and its destiny for mankind.

That is the Christian method. No one can see life whole or see it steadily but from God's vantage-point. And no one can reach that vantage-point except through

one's brother. To look into the face of God is to see the whole world's good summed up and complete. It is, therefore, the hope of the world that men learn to serve unselfishly. For they *must* see God, else life is all futile. And they cannot see God except their brother be with them.

The purpose of the Christian life can be stated very simply. It is to stand some day—each day, we might say—before the face of the Prince, holding a brother by the hand. That is all. To stand before the face of the Prince, with one arm up and the other arm out, holding a brother by the hand. Johan Bojer says, in one of his books : " Don't despise a single human being ! He is made of the same material as mankind in general. The infinite world is mirrored in the small. You, who want to take everyone with you on the way to the great dawn, help that man ! " [1] It means standing faithful in all the relationships of life. It means helping the boy and the girl in the natural problems of their growing up and in the tragic and impending hours of their going astray. It means reaching out all the way to those nameless, unwanted ones that come to birth, as others do, with a cry, but who lack the love and security that can train that crying into laughter and a free man's serving of his fellows. Society, with prudish and cruel inconsistency, casts out some of its loveliest and most potent treasure.

That is because the world is in desperate need of understanding what human life is. " *God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.*" With this fact, if it be a fact, religion and life, in its human dimension, begin. But what does that mean ? What is it that we must understand about God if we are to understand man ? Any true conception of service comes from that inquiry. If man is made in the image of infinite God the possibilities of his life are infinite. And service is the aid that men can give one another towards the realization

[1] *The Face of the World.*

of those infinite possibilities. Hitherto the idea of service has been left to the mercies of a sentimental emotion and confined to the performance of certain acts of sympathy and kindness. But it belongs properly to the realm of our most rigorous thinking. It concerns the very motive of life and of human activity. Human life is driven forward by a service motive or by some other motive. But what other motive is there but an acquisitive one? And it is the motive at the root of life that counts, not one that dangles from a branch of it to sport in the wind or to attract the attention of passers-by.

1. First of all, then, God is a creator, "*Maker of Heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.*"

He makes suns and stars and the music of the spheres. He builds mountains and oceans and fills them with his treasures. He paints the sunsets and "every tint of every tiniest flower." He sings with "every bird but builds in joyful hope." He whispers love in youthful hearts and sends some out beyond old frontiers in searching quest of ever greater loves. God creates.

And man is made in his image. Does man create? That is the question for those who would really serve their fellows to ask. Because it goes to the root of man's nature. He must have outlet for an irresistible urge to pour himself forth. Kill that urge and you kill the spirit of a man. He is made that way.

He who serves truly looks out upon men and offers himself in bondage to the hope that they may be the best that they can be. He does not presume to know the best for any individual. He stands in reverence before the mystery of a man. He sees him as he can be if given a chance. He seeks for him only freedom and opportunity. He glimpses life as it is becoming.

So he serves. That is, he helps others to be creative, to be themselves. He helps to organize life on that basis. A man's work and play and worship must be marked by craftsmanship. They must show a growing control of the

materials involved in them. They must be characterized by a finding of himself more and more consciously and effectively through them. That is creativeness, and service is an effort after it.

Such service is sadly missed in modern life. Industry, as now conceived and organized, is not interested primarily in the development of people, but in the production of things. It may say that the production of things will enrich the lives of the people who use them, but that is not the point at issue. The fact is patent that human life and its possibilities of fullness are sacrificed for things. And that is a violation of human life and its values.

Automobiles are one of the greatest factors in our civilization, but it is dreadful to think of the maddening monotony and dulling of the human spirit in those who stand, day after day, by a moving platform turning bolt number 57 or screw number 9. High wages and short hours, and old age insurance, and gymnasiums, and swimming pools, have all too long constituted our idea of service and social work. But such things, good in themselves, are only palliatives, and they dodge the essential facts of life.

People are the things that count.

God created man in his own image, and the only social service that is worthy of the name is service that brings a man nearer the image of his Creator. And so with industry. Theories of industry that dodge that issue are cavils. If we must have coffee that is raised and picked by spiritually undeveloped peons in Brazil, who, in turn, use tools made by spiritually undeveloped, harried, steel workers in England or America, who, in their turn, wear clothes that spiritually undeveloped labour-driven garment workers make in factories somewhere else, and so on, then we live in a kind of madhouse. It is not a question of the value of coffee or of tools or of clothes. We do not need to think of getting along without them. We

have to think more carefully about the function of work and of what it is supposed to do for the worker.

God is a creator. And man, made in His image, is a creator also.

2. Secondly, God is a Giver. *God so loved the world that he gave*—what? We can only express it in terms of human affection. He gave His Son—the dearest thing that He possessed. And the Son gave Himself gladly and completely.

Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate. . . .

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and giver of life. . . .

God is love.

God gives and spends Himself. It is His nature to give and thus to serve.

So it becomes man's nature, made in His image. He must find himself and the purpose and poise of life in something of that same spirit of abandon.

We have thought long enough and talked long enough
  And the world is weary of words,
And the Sword itself is clockwork now
  A sullen wheel of swords.

Like sickening steams before the sun
  The fumes of culture creep—
And the wise men laugh more sadly
  Than the strong men used to weep.

And I know that clouds are alive and cling
  And the dusty path is rough;
But I know that the least grain of the dust
  Has never been praised enough.

A single grain of the drifting dust
  If we took it and loved it well
We could blow the trumpet North and South
  And fight with the world and hell.

And find the truth of an ancient thing
Lost on the oldest lyre.
It was the Man who burnt his ships,
Who set the Thames on fire. [1]

The man who burnt his ships!"

Is that the sign of a Christian now or in any day? Ought it not to be? Are we still clinging to earth-bound things that vainly promise ease and safety? Are we holding fast to indulgence that, called rights, only grasp the world to the centre of self? Or have we learned the meaning of that freedom wherewith Christ can set us free? that freedom which is conformity to the laws of God's nature and ours, because we are of His mould and likeness?

God gives. When He came into the world of men He did not leave His glory behind. He took it with Him and bore it as only God could bear it—in a mother's womb, in a cattle-shed and a workshop, on the roadways of a dusty province and in the washing of disciples' feet.

Have we no eyes to see where the glory of life is to be be found? Where joy and peace and victory? Have we no voice to cry out to them in greeting, no will to respond? We can find them only where God placed them. We can find them only where he found them, and nothing will satisfy the human spirit until it obeys this law of its inmost divine nature.

God created man in his own image. God gives and spends Himself in tireless love. That is why pride is so deadly, selfishness so dastardly, daintiness becomes defeat. Service in tireless love of the brethren is the mark of a man because it is the mark of God.

3. And so the world and the Christian Church itself are in desperate need of men who see life's victory in the simple terms of standing some day before the face of the King holding a brother by the hand. The world needs

[1] G. K. Chesterton, *The Fanatic.*

great lovers: men who reach out beyond all the barriers that the world erects between man and man; and who, when they give, give themselves, no less. There is a saying preserved from the second century, of someone who, observing the Christian sect, exclaimed: *How these Christians love one another.* Such love was a new phenomenon in social relationships and represents something of supreme significance. But pride in that achievement might well have been limited long since. Because when the love of Christians became merely a love of one another the freshness and the power of Christianity gave way. And, almost since the day that one marvelled at the love of Christians, it has been a commonplace for men to say, and to say truly, *How these Christians hate one another.* Confine the centrifugal power of love and it will shatter into bits the instruments and the agents of the attempt.

The Christian body was never meant to be a club of saints loving one another, but a company of adventurers loving everybody. It will never be a power again until it becomes a Power House, until it changes its figure from an ark of safety to an organ of sacrifice, until it calls men into it, not to get but to give—and to give to the uttermost.

I speak thus, in this Mother Church of Anglo-Saxon Christianity as a Padre of the Toc H Movement. I dare to think of this movement, sprung to life from the rock-hewn tomb of the War's victorious Calvary, as the offering of the Holy Ghost to our times, to recruit the world's youth for His purposes. I cannot fathom its depth nor foresee its future. But having tried its spirit, I believe it to be of God. And that, because the core of its inner and outer expression is service. It says that men are to find themselves and God, through a painstaking effort to enrich the lives of others. I believe that to be supremely true.

But it perceives even more. People who try to enrich

the lives of others must sooner or later ask what richness means and of what it consists. Men cannot give what they do not possess; and out of the effort to understand may be born a revival of vital religion that will drive men again to spiritual adventure. Some upthrust of the world's spiritual life to balance the advance of technological science and its wonderful material benefits is sorely needed. And some new movement of the Spirit to recall the Church to its first love and its essential purpose awaits a gorgeous harvest.

The war was a burning word to men, ever slow of heart to believe what prophets have taught, that the only kind of life or religion that can save and serve the world is one that has renounced for ever the acquisitive motive. The Christianity that has failed is the Christianity that asked men to save their own souls. The Christianity that is to be is the Christianity that asks men to save, not themselves, but the world, and to give up any and everything to do it. That was Christ's way of finding life. It must be man's way also.

Such movements need have but one purpose, and that purpose is at once simple and superbly grand. It is to stand some day before the face of the King, with many brethren holding one another by the hand. Standing thus, the meaning of life will be seen in great beauty and great glory. For through it will breathe the laughter of souls set free—men and women and a joyous company of little children led up to " the light where God Himself appears "—the Kingdom come at last.

VIII.—TOC H—WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT MAY BECOME[1]

I WANT to speak to you about a curious institution of which you may or may not know something already, but which, in any case, I hope you may come to know intimately when you have left school, that queer movement known as Toc H.

As a start, I would like to try and dispel a certain misconception which appears still to exist in the minds of a good many who have just heard vaguely about it. "Toc H," they say. "Oh, that is an ex-servicemen's organization of some sort, is it not?" Well, it is not. It is nothing to do with ex-service men as such. True, it came out of an experience in the war years, just as the British Red Cross Society came directly out of the Crimean War and the work of Florence Nightingale in the hospitals of Scutari, and the Boy Scout movement came out of the South African War and the siege of Mafeking. So it is true that Toc H came out of the Great War, but it is equally true to say that to-day it is no more an ex-service men's show than the Red Cross or the Boy Scout movement. On the contrary, it is a youth movement; and will stand or fall, not on the doings of its members who served in the War, necessarily a diminishing body, both in numbers and influence, but on the spirit and vigour of its younger members who have come, and will continue to come, after.

Still, if we are to understand this thing, we must first look at its origin, and therefore I must take you back for a space to the war years, and to the little Belgian town of Poperinghe, which stood as a sort of gateway to that vortex of the war area known as the Ypres salient. It was to

[1] An address given to a Camp of Public School boys at Savoyniu, Switzerland, January 1927.

Poperinghe that the troops holding that salient, incomparably the most consistently beastly section of the whole battle-line, used to come back for their periods of recuperation when released from the line; and it was in a little street of that town that a House, afterwards to be famous as Talbot House, Poperinghe, was taken over in 1915 as a sort of soldiers' club, and put in charge of the man who afterwards became the Founder-Padre of Toc H.

Now, before the war was over, there were many such soldiers' clubs established along the rear of the battle-line, but I think no one would for a moment dispute the assertion that Talbot House was quite unlike any of the rest. There was something about it which none of the others had, something hard to describe but easy to experience, which made it what it was. I despair of being able to convey it to you in words, but let us go in imagination into the old House and see what we shall find. Perhaps then we may understand.

Entering by the front door, we find ourselves in a sort of narrow Hall, leading right through the house. In front is a large room used as a concert and recreation room. Here, too, is the Coffee Bar. Beyond is the garden. But look first upon the wall on your right. Here is the notice-board, the contents of which were always a joy. Notices came and went, but there were three—well known they got to be—which were more or less permanent.

The first was a hand pointing to the door by which we have just entered, and under it the legend, "To Pessimists —Emergency Exit." The second is a little farther along over the Visitors' Book; and ran as follows (remember that the only visitors were soldiers on active service): "Please write your name and address in the Visitors' Book, otherwise how can we forward your umbrella or trace our teaspoons." And the third, hard by, read: "If you are accustomed to spit on the carpet at home, please spit here."

Now, I have mentioned those three notices, not simply because they were funny, but because I think they were

important. Home—that was the first idea. Any one whose idea of home was irretrievably bound up with spitting on the carpet, would actually have been quite welcome to spit there. But, in fact, no one did. For a wise and kindly humour will not only make a stranger feel at home, but will often call out a response in the process of doing so, which a mere soulless "regulation" will quite fail to achieve, even as it destroys the home feeling in its fruitless attempt.

And now we mount the staircase to the first-floor landing. Here we find two rooms of interest. One is a Library and Writing Room. A real Library, too, with books of all kinds—from the latest scientific and theological works to Nat Gould and Ethel M. Dell. Here you may see men reading or writing, or sleeping, and very likely a figure wandering round to see that the pens and paper are all right. Just spare him a second glance. For this is no Permanent Base man, unable to go into the Line, and employed on an easy job here. Very likely it will be an officer, during his brief spell of rest, "taking a turn." And the men in the chairs are mostly private soldiers.

And then come across the Landing. Here is a door labelled "Chaplain's Room," and on it that now world-famous parody of the Inscription over the Gates of Hell in Dante's Inferno: "All rank abandon, ye who enter here." And inside you will probably find a tea-party in progress—and may, if you are lucky, see what I have seen and what could, I imagine, be seen nowhere else in the zone of the armies—a general officer and a lance-corporal of signallers, knocking knees at a little table over a plate of bread and butter and a cup of tea.

And this without any artificiality, or any damage to discipline. Simply that in the atmosphere of that place men could get past and over artificial and temporary differences of position and rank—and meet upon the higher ground of their common manhood; meet, and greet, and treat one another simply as men.

So you see we have found two of the threads that went to make up the fabric of that life there, and we have risen in the finding. Those stairs have brought us up from the welcoming humour and homeliness to the real fellowship and brotherhood which was built upon them. But there is another staircase ahead of you and another storey to explore.

Actually there were two, for the next storey was taken up with bedrooms. But from it a ladder ascended to that great loft which always runs under the roof of a Belgian house. Here in peace time the owner might have stored the fruits of his garden, potatoes, carrots and the like. Possibly apples are here to ripen. But it is now a storehouse in which fruits of a different kind may ripen.

In it stands the one piece of furniture which was taken over with the house. It was found in an outhouse—and now stands here, the Crown of the whole house—an old Carpenter's Bench, placed here that on it the Carpenter of Nazareth may do His work, shaping and fashioning that material in which He works, the spirits and souls of men. So that Carpenter's Bench was used throughout those years, the Altar of the house, at which I suppose some 10,000 men first and last made their Communions, and as it has been written elsewhere, " Many made their first Communion here, hundreds made their last."

I would have you notice that it was unobtrusive, that " Upper Room," hidden away almost, up its ladder. And the fact of its presence was never forced upon any one. A bell would ring, and men would drift up that staircase and find themselves in the inner sanctuary. And then they would come back into the fellowship and the laughter, and there was no contrast, but a new strand had been woven into the threefold cord of the life of the house. And what the exact proportions were of those three ingredients typified by those three storeys, I cannot say, but I know that each was necessaary, and that each played its part in the total harmony as it could never have

done in isolation; so that the effect of the whole was something that we who knew it, felt to be unique in our experience. I remember, when home on leave, trying to describe the impression made upon myself by saying: "It seemed to me more like the Home of Nazareth than anything I had ever imagined." I believe that others, quite independently, used almost the same words.

Well, eventually, even the war came to an end, and some, though only some, of those who had known the old house, came home. And in view of what I have tried to say, you will see how inevitable it was that they should feel "This thing must not be lost. The Spirit of the old house will be needed just as much in the future as it was in the past. There will be many a young man going to work in the loneliness of a great city, to whom such a centre will be of as great value as it ever was to the young soldier in the morass of Flanders." And so, after a short interval, an attempt was made to transplant Talbot House to London—a little, very little, money was collected, and a flat taken in a house in Red Lion Square, and Tubby Clayton, by a great venture of faith, with no visible means of subsistence, resigned the important post he then had, and came up to renew in the heart of London the work which he had done so inimitably for three years in Poperinghe.

The story of those early days is an epic, but one that can hardly be written in this generation, for it is all bound up with personalities, and their faith and sacrifice. It is a story of men who for the faith that was in them, gave themselves to the unknown forlorn hope; of men who abandoned assured positions to throw in their lot with a cause which could but rarely boast of a bank balance sufficient to carry it more than a very few weeks ahead; of men who sacrificed openings which represented the ambition of years, in order to perform a humble job in the service of their fellows; of noble gifts, some of large extent, to be reckoned by thousands of pounds, representing

in certain cases a large proportion of the total possessions of the donors; of other smaller, indeed, but given at the cost of, perhaps, even greater sacrifice, such as the gift of that young ex-officer, who, sorely battered by the war and now out of employment, drew his wound gratuity and gave it all, as a thank-offering for one Communion in the old House. Such happenings as these, it was, that gave to those brave pioneers the power to carry on, and the assurance that this movement was not simply the creation of their own imaginations, but that for all its apparent weakness it was encircled by the invisible hosts, with their chariots of fire and horses of fire.

Two things happened in the early days which need mention.

The first was that it was discovered that the name Talbot House could not be continued. There was already existing a " Talbot Settlement " in South London, and so, to avoid confusion, the name was reduced to its initials, T.H., which, in the language of army signallers, is pronounced Toc H. Hence the present name of the movement.

The second is this. At the beginning, I suppose, the vision that the pioneers had before their minds, was simply that of a house, similar to the old House, or perhaps two such, established in London, and gradually others established in other great towns, as hostels, at which lonely young men might live, and which would act as " Every-man's Club " in the way that the house at Poperinghe had done for the armies.

But gradually it became plain that this was not to be the line of development. Almost spontaneously, branches of what was originally called " The Fellowship of Talbot House " sprang up in various parts of the country, meeting when and where they could; not dependent upon a house, but preserving in themselves something of the family life of the old house of Poperinghe. New Houses, too, came gradually, and the story of the coming of those Houses

is a romance in itself, if one had only time to tell it. But as things took shape in this formative period, the shape that they took was not that of a collection of houses, but of a great family organized in branches all over the country, with houses belonging to it in certain centres, like "strong points" in an army zone, in which picked teams of members lived, and upon one or another of which any "whole time" officers were naturally based.

And to-day, at the beginning of 1927, the extent of the movement is this: two hundred and forty branches or groups, with nineteen houses and three hostels in the British Isles: seven branches or groups in Australia; three in New Zealand; eight (with two houses) in Canada; twenty-eight in South Africa; seven in India; two in Ceylon; four in the Malay Peninsula; two in Egypt; two in Palestine; one in Iraq; three in South America, with a house in Buenos Aires; two in Belgium; and last, but by no means least, three with two houses in the United States of America.

And what is it doing? What is it all about? Clearly such growth as this represents would have been impossible if it had merely been an attempt to recapture a memory of the past. To explain it there must be in it something living and vital.

Of course it has had its ups and downs and made its mistakes, and will make others. You remember the three storeys of the old house of which I spoke earlier on. There were many who never got farther than the ground floor, with its witty notices and coffee-bar and concert-room. So there are some who have never seen in Toc H anything more than a slap-me-on-the-back sort of heartiness and good fellowship. That impression is, I think, dying, if it is not already dead. I hope it is, for it is a completely mistaken idea, simply a superficial impression left upon those who have never really got beyond the threshold. There are more who have got beyond this, and have realized that one of the real strengths of Toc H

is that, in a world riddled by artificial barriers, of class, and party, and sect, here, as perhaps nowhere else, these things do fall away, and men of every sort, of different outlook and history, can and do, meet and work together simply on the basis of their common manhood.

But even that is not the whole story. You cannot, with the best will in the world, overcome these barriers, and knit together into a fellowship men who have been brought up with totally different outlooks, often mutually antagonistic, unless you have a strong common interest and common activity which will serve to bind them together; definite enough to make them feel that they are all united in a common crusade; and yet wide enough in its scope to afford a field for the activities of men of every conceivable different talent.

And this is where the top storey comes in. The common interest and activity is the service of humanity, conceived just as widely as Jesus Christ conceived it—wide as the Purpose of God. To this every member is pledged.

The Symbol of the Movement is, as you know, a Lamp, in form that of the old CatacombLamp of the early Christians, but with the double cross of Ypres forming the handle. On it are inscribed the words: "*In Lumine Tuo Videbimus Lumen*" ("In Thy Light shall we see Light."). And at his initiation every member is asked: "What first lit this Lamp?" and he replies: "Unselfish Sacrifice." Does it matter a great deal whether, as he says those words, his mind goes back to the Hill outside Jerusalem, and the Great Cross that stood there, or to those low ridges beyond Ypres where a forest of lesser crosses, re-interpreted to a world that had nearly forgotten the meaning of the Symbol of Sacrifice?

And then he is asked again: "What alone can maintain this Light?" and he replies: "Unselfish Service." And by his next answer he acknowledges that this service is not a sort of largess to be given or withheld at the pleasure of the individual, but a debt due from everyone who has

entered into the fruits of the sacrifice of others; for to the next question: "What is Service?" he replies: "The Rent that we pay for our room on earth."

Therefore it is that each Branch must have two officers. One is a Chaplain. The other is called a Job-master, and it is his duty to discover the needs and opportunities for service in his own locality, and to bring together supply and demand, the man to the need, the opportunity to the man. And so we have again the three strands woven into the common life; the fellowship, of the whole family and of the particular branch, from which I hope the lightness of wit and laughter will never be wanting; and irradiating it all the Light which was lit by Sacrifice, and which continues to illuminate the way of Service.

No one knows what the future of the movement is to be. Many of us have our thoughts and our visions. If you ask me what my vision of it is, it is this. I seem to see in history, that when abuses and misunderstandings of His Will for men have threatened to clog the wheels of God's Chariot, that at such a time some one or something has arisen with a new method to set His purpose again before men.

So it was with the Franciscan movement. At a time when wealth at headquarters was stifling the life of the Church, Francis was raised up with his Gospel of Poverty, and re-interpreted Christ to Europe by its means.

And now, when it is not wealth but division that is crippling the work of Christ's fighting forces, it seems to me not impossible that it may be Toc H that is being raised up to restore the greater unity, and to show to men of different creeds and parties the way to work and to serve together. And if this should come to pass, it will be a great thing, for which one will be ever thankful, to have been allowed to be amongst those who at the beginning "Magnified the work and beheld it afar off."

One thing is certain, and that is, that if this, or anything like it, is to happen, it is essential that each section of the

community should be adequately represented in the ranks of the membership. At present the Public School element is numerically weak. There may be, I think there are, reasons for this. But it is none the less deplorable, both from the point of view of Toc H and also from that of the Public School men. And therefore, while I am not asking you to rush straight off and apply for membership, I am asking you not to ignore the subject. Keep it before you: seek further information. It is the boast of the Public Schools that they turn out men with a sense of responsibility and a capacity for service; but often I think this is not used, because the individual does not know where or how he can render his service. Toc H at least, if you will give it the chance, may be able to help you to the answer to those questions.

May I conclude by quoting to you what is called "The Statement of Aim," a resolution adopted and confirmed by two successive general councils, in order to make clear the basis upon which the whole movement rests? It runs as follows :—

"Remembering with gratitude how God used the Old House to bring home to multitudes of men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities and to send them forth strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon Earth; we pledge ourselves to strive:—

"To listen now and always for the voice of God;

"To know His Will revealed in Christ, and to do it fearlessly, reckoning nothing of the world's opinion or its successes for ourselves or for this our family; and towards this end,

"To think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely."

IX.—THE IDEAL OF TOC H

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.—St. John xv. 13.

We must not for a moment limit the application of this text to the Great Example who springs naturally to our minds. It is a possible human path for all, sometimes by a single act, but more often by a lifetime of acts of devotion. That this height of love and service is a possibility for each one of us is an extraordinarily arresting and stimulating thought.

But I do not wish to speak on the abstract question of service, or on the Gospel of Love at large, but rather concerning a particular concrete activity now at work in the world, as showing the mind of Christ moving obviously among men.

That particular activity is known as Toc H, vaguely understood by most people as a movement among young men with a curious name. I want to give a very brief sketch of its history, its aims, and its work; and to close with a defence of the definition I gave above of its being an activity showing the mind of Christ working in the world.

Toc H is really almost impossible to define, for it is a spirit and an outlook rather than an institution, and you cannot define a spirit; you can only see its results and give thanks to God for it. In many respects Toc H reminds me of the early Franciscan movement with all its cheery Catholic brotherhood and service and freedom from conventions; but without its obligatory poverty and celibacy. It was a war baby, but conceived without passion or shame, and has grown to vigorous adolescence in the subsequent period which we have elected to call peace.

Toc H, the army signallers' way of saying T.H., stood for Talbot House in the Rue de l'Hôpital, Poperinghe. It was a rest house, and much more, for the soldiers in the deadly salient of Ypres, founded in memory of Gilbert, son of the Bishop of Winchester, of whose career and influence such high hopes were entertained, but who was killed at Hooge in July 1915. The house was founded and opened, so that he who was dead might yet speak and help, and by God's good providence, the Rev. P. B. Clayton was called from ordinary army chaplain's work to take over this new job. The house was made into a real home with an atmosphere of the same, comfortably furnished, where all became gentlemen, because they were treated as such, and all were brethren, for over the door stood the notice "All rank abandon, ye who enter here." The true foundation of this brotherhood was found in the upper room, the home of the Father of All, where all were taught the working of the larger plans of God for the well-being of men, Justice, Truth, the defence of the weak, to the death if the call should come. No one can measure the strength and uplift that was given in that Divine power-house to thousands of our young brethren.

The war passed, but the call to service endured, for it was and is of the eternal order. "Teach us so to live and love that we may give our lives for our friends." That was the principle that had bitten deep into the characters of the members of Talbot House in Poperinghe, and they asked their Padre to lead them still on the same road.

And so Toc H passed over to England, first in Red Lion Square, but soon bursting all bonds and spreading over the world. The members gather in "Marks" (something between a hostel and a district headquarters), branches and groups; a committee is formed from all classes, and the important Job-master elected. Soon calls for help come in, calls for scoutmasters and club managers, organ-

izers of camps, helpers of the "down and out," visitors for prisoners, cheerers of the sick, friends for the lonely, the young and the tempted. As at Poperinghe the activity of the brethren centres round the Father's table and the desire to do the Father's will, as it has been completely interpreted by the one perfect Son. For to be effective work must have an ideal, a standard of absolute excellence as far as we can know it. This rule is the same in Art, or Music, or Business, as well as in Religion. To be effective all must push towards an ideal.

And the Toc H ideal is Christ.

Here must begin the defence of Toc H as suitable for the best and most virile of English youth.

It is easy to imagine many of an average congregation, and still more outside the average congregations, saying at this point, "Very interesting history, and no doubt very excellent work being done. Doubtless the members are very good young fellows, but probably rather of the pale and goody-goody type." "Will you join?" "Oh, no; not in my line at all." "But is it in Christ's line?" "Well, perhaps so." There we have part of the tragedy of the unsettlement of men's minds. The Christ ideal is to them something anæmic and effeminate. This disastrous result is partly due to Christian art, which depicts Him who goes forth conquering and to conquer as a gentle, dreamy figure, with long curling hair, clad in trailing robes in which a day's work could never have been done. It is a figure that appeals to our protective instincts rather than to our passionate devotion. From our earliest years the gentleness of Jesus has been taught us, and practically no other trait has been added to it. Of course it is true, but it is certainly not the whole truth, nor is it a characteristic that appeals to Anglo-Saxons, the citizens and pioneers of a mighty Empire. If we were to ask our average young man what virtues his ideal man should have, he would probably say Courage, Loyalty, Perseverance, practical business sense,

and a certain stern justice. He would be surprised beyond measure if you approved and said that those were characteristics of Christ. Yet it was so. *Courage?* It wanted a courageous man to face a raging mob of Jews in the Temple, strong in their vested rights, assured of government protection and running a profitable business, and to lash them out into the outer court and to knock over their stands. It needed a man of almost unimaginable courage steadfastly to set his face to go to Jerusalem when He *knew* that crucifixion awaited Him there. In the war we admired the cool courage of the secret-service men in the enemy's country, whose first mistake would mean the nearest wall and a firing squad. Yet they felt that they had a sporting chance of getting through. How many would have volunteered had they been told that they would certainly be caught, and when caught would be crucified? *A sense of business?* "Lord thy pound hath gained ten pounds." "Well done, good and faithful servant." Surely a thousand per cent. capital increase should satisfy any one! Or *Perseverance.* Look at His parables of the importunate widow, or the friend at midnight; or still more His persevering love in the face of misunderstanding, ignorance and hatred. Or, lastly, a glimpse of the sense of *ruthless justice*, such as we see in the world of Nature which He created. "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Bring up the scene to your mind; the whimpering, struggling culprit, the boat, the stern Figure on the shore. They row out and lift their burden. The spectators hide their faces or look beseechingly at the Judge. A sullen plunge in the water, and the Judge simply says, "Better for him." Is that stern enough?

Believe me, whatever ideals and virtues are true and good, which lead upwards and are worth following, draw them together in a person and you will find that you have

drawn a picture of Christ, partial probably, but true as far as you have gone.

So, if my definition was true, and that in Toc H we can see the mind of Christ working among men, you may be sure that your own ideals will be found among its members, and your contribution will be of value in filling in the portrait of the Saviour still walking among men.

X.—THE BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL OF TOC H IN CALCUTTA

Some people will tell you that Toc H was founded in Flanders during the war. Other people may say that Toc H, as it now is, began at a meeting held in London after the war was over. But this Lamp stands here as a witness to the fact that Toc H is really far older than that. It proclaims the truth that Toc H is nearly two thousand years old.

If you could come close, you would see that this Lamp is of the type of an early Roman lamp. It was around lamps like this that the early Christians gathered in the catacombs of Rome. They met together, those far-off brethren of ours and they remembered a Young Man who had passed ahead not then so many years before. He was a Man of the country and the open air, who loved life and made friends of all kinds of people—farmers, shepherds, fishermen, soldiers, civil servants—and he had gathered round him a gang of young men and taught them a certain way of life. (Do not be deceived by pictures. Our Lord was a young man, and his Apostles were young men, but older, certainly, than the average Toc H Group.)

Well, they remembered—the members of his gang and the others after them who lighted lamps like this—they remembered the shining characteristics that marked his life, how always he had put God first, his friends next and himself last; and how, at the end, he took that life which he always accepted and loved, and he deliberately smashed it in pieces for the sake of his friends.

"This is my life," he said, "eat it, and get it into yourselves."

And so they lighted their lamps and gathered round to

receive into themselves what they believed to be the only life worth living, the life of Jesus Christ.

That is how those lamps used to be lighted, those early Christian lamps, and then gradually they disappeared. But now, all over the world, these lamps are appearing again, because once more men are realizing that the only life worth living, the only life which can make even the hideousness of war beautiful, is the life of Jesus Christ. In the war, men saw it for themselves and they know.

This lamp was lighted from the Prince's Lamp, which stands in the Chapel of Richard Cœur-de-Lion in All Hallows Church, away in London. It does not belong to us; it belongs to India. And every future lamp given to Toc H will be relighted from it as it is handed over to its Branch. While I speak, the Members of the Groups in Bombay, Madras, Wellington, Cawnpore, Colombo and Kandy are standing to attention round their rushlights with their thoughts turned towards us in this Cathedral.

In a moment, when the lights are turned out, you will hear questions and answers which will tell you what this lamp stands for.

"What is this Lamp?"

And we shall answer: "The Light of Toc H."

"What first lit it?"

"Unselfish Sacrifice."

"What alone will maintain it?"

"Unselfish Service."

"What is service?"

"Service is the rent we pay for our room on earth."

Then will follow the Ceremony of Light, with which we begin all our meetings. And in the silence we shall remember our Elder Brethren who have gone on ahead, English boys who smashed up their lives for England, French and Italian boys who gave their lives for France and Italy—yes, and German and Austrian boys who died most willingly for Germany and Austria—thousands of honest, decent lads who, in this end at least, put Right

first, their Country next and themselves last. In the sacrifice which those boys made it is too late for us to share, but it is in the light of their sacrifice that Toc H lives. We are gathering Groups all over the world to see to it, if God helps us, that their spirit does not die out of the earth. We are trying to raise up children for men who gave their whole future and all that the future might hold.

Toc H is a very simple organization. It is not Militarist; because it has taken as its motto the words: "To conquer hate." It is not Anglican; since anybody who worships Christ and wants to follow in His ways may belong to it. We form groups in different places; anybody who joins us promises to give up one evening a week to some form of service and to treat other Toc H men as his brothers. We choose a padre and try to learn what he has to teach us; and we choose a job-master and we have to do the job he sets us.

For myself, if God helps me, I will never have anything to do with any Society which simply goes about asking men to be good. The first Christianity never did that. It pointed men to a sacrifice which they were unable to share, and invited them to join a Brotherhood to which they were not fit to belong, and then told them to carry on. That is what Toc H does to-day. It points us to a sacrifice which it is now too late for us to share. It shows us a shining Brotherhood of which we are none of us worthy and it asks us so to live that the light of this Lamp may, in the end, shine in every place in India where Christians are settled.

XI.—WHAT IS TOC H?

The Story of a Light

This is written by a padre to shipbuilders. Our jobs are not so totally different. We are both here to build, as best we may, good ships, and to make them strong enough to ride turbulent seas. Both of us do our best, while we may, though the ships we seek to fashion more often than not pass out of our ken—to come into our ken again only when we hear of their end.

And there are other connections, too. We both deal in anchors, believe in power control and the need of pilots in difficult waters. For centuries the connection has been realized; you build navies, we build in naves—and it is the same word. And though you may not go down to the sea in ships, the ships you are interested in would not go in the safety that they do but for their interest in Lights. Guiding Lights interest us both, and the story of Toc H is the story of a Light.

From 1914 to 1918 there was a war. An amazing number of people seem to have forgotten the fact, but unless we seek to remember—and to be constructive in our memories—then, as sure as guns are guns, we will find ourselves forced to remember again . . . and it will be too late.

During wars quite a number of unusual things happen, and some are worth thinking about; all the other things that happen are recorded by historians.

One of the odd things was that a whole manhood was dressed up in the same colour of clothing and had to stand in the same colour of mud. In the things that really

mattered—matters literally of Life and Death—men from universities and from underworlds, from terraces and tenements, Highlands and Backlands, found themselves on the same (muddy) footing.

Another odd thing was that the war (itself a complete contradiction of Christianity) did, in fact, produce essentially Christian conditions of life. Men (whether they knew the Shorter Catechism or not) became slaves in a cause, forgot themselves, risked their lives for other people, and "having nothing to be cheerful about" remained cheerful. And the odd result of it was (odd, at least, to those who believed Christianity was a fairy tale) that there did spring up out of it all a spirit and a "worth whileness" that was worth very much more than a hundred million pounds (which is, of course, what Christianity has always promised).

Several years after the war a man, who had been through it, said: "It sounds queer, but sometimes I wish I was back in France. For all that sea of mud, somehow I was contented out there." When asked by an astonished listener, "Why?" he replied casually, "God knows." He had no need to be casual; he was much nearer the truth than he knew.

Perhaps the muddiest sea of all was the Ypres salient. We had, on the average, two hundred and thirty casualties a day there for four years of war—a good many of them in the mud. But there was a bit of rock in the salient to which men went to dry themselves and to breathe again in comparative security—or on which they steadied themselves before going down into the deep. It was the Flemish town of Poperinghe, standing back and more or less out of the murderous sea that raged round Ypres. In the middle of the rock there was a lighthouse—that kept flashing out its message. Like all good lighthouses it was the same message all the time. Well over half a million "mariners" picked up the light at some time or another,

and quite a number of them got so interested that they climbed up to the top of the stairs of the lighthouse to see how the lamp worked.

The lighthouse in question was a hostel, or rest-house, called Talbot House. (Its code name to the mariners who signalled it was T.H.—or TOC H, if they were proper signallers.) The Keeper of the Light was a Padre, called Clayton. The lighthouse was so-named after a very promising young mariner—Gilbert Talbot—who had gone down to that sea of mud never to return. (If he had returned—no less a man than Lord Balfour predicted—he would one day have steered the Ship of State from a Downing Street bridge.)

In what sense was Talbot House a Lighthouse?

In the first place lighthouses give hope and encouragement to all at sea. Pirates use them as well as sea-going missions. And Talbot House welcomed saints and sinners —not rapturously because they were saints nor condescendingly because they were sinners, but gladly because they were men, and, like all men, a mixture of both.

Then again lighthouses are placed there for every class of craft; for the Tramp as much as for the Liner with its Royal Suite; for the herring fleet as well as the deep sea whaler. There may be different classes of ship, but they are all one in the Fellowship of the Sea, especially when there are storms about. Toc H flashed out the same message for all alike. That was why it bore above its door the legend, "All rank abandon, ye who enter here." Class was forgotten in common fellowship within its rooms. The Ranker Officer met the non-commissioned nobleman with an easy welcome. The one time frequenter of a "Public School" forgot his snobbishness as easily there as a one time frequenter of a "Public House" discovered his worth. ("Madness," says the cynic? Call it what you will. It was the "madness" of War's Fellowship that alone kept men sane.)

And Toc H was itself a lighthouse. Within its walls there was light. Light-hearted mariners, to begin with, finding better things to talk and sing about over their pipes than the roar of the storm without.

Light-hearted, but still mariners, men acquainted with the deeps whose turbulence, there, was none of their seeking. Young in years—the most of them—but old in their knowledge, or at least in their perplexity, of the deep things; the things of Faith and Love and Fellowship and Life and Death, the only abiding realities on any sea. And men came there—half a million of them in those four years of storm—to Talbot House that was "inhabited of seafaring men, a renowned city," because somehow they knew it was "strong in the sea." There was a Spirit there that in miniature reproduced the great spirit of fellowship without —that in itself was worth coming for. But they came mostly because there at last the meaning of that Spirit was explained. Up in the roof of the lighthouse there was the LIGHT.

Up a rickety stair the men found the explanation of it all, the reason for the Spirit that kept men sane in the war. For up the rickety stair was a tiny Chapel flashing out its message of guidance and encouragement to all that passed that way. A tiny Home for the Light of the World, shining in all that darkness and the darkness did not master it. No compulsory Church Parade was ever held there, but over one hundred thousand men found their way to it—and found their way by it for the duties and perplexities of their daily life. Many must have worshipped there for the last time on earth.

Thus in Toc H there was the light of true gaiety and the light of true religion—and you cannot divorce the two. "There was," said *Punch* "a Talbot House in Poperinghe from 1915-1918. . . . which brought a corner of Heaven into the hell of men's and officers' lives." And it was a corner of heaven not merely because it was removed from war's distresses, but because men found in its atmosphere

(few, indeed, were the sermons that were preached there) the truth. The truth that all the good fellowship between man and man that was so strange an experience of war was not just "something that happened," but was inevitably born of the sacrifice and service that was their daily portion. And when that connection is made there is only a short stair—and that not a rickety one—up to a bigger truth still—something which no one has yet satisfactorily put into words, but which is none the less plain—the vital connection that exists between fellowship and service and One who claimed to be the Light of the World. Once that connection becomes vital, corners of heaven become possible in men's lives and all kinds of things become explained.

So much for the past. When the war was over, when, indeed, it had been over more than a year and Toc H was but a memory—though a very living one—in the minds of its one-time mariners, there met together in a London room, Clayton, its old padre, and about a score of others who had loved the spirit of the old place. The meeting was not altogether unlike the old days; the room was full of smoke and laughter, officers and men were together again, there weren't nearly enough chairs to go round, and there wasn't one big enough for the padre (for you must know that he resembles nothing so much as a gasometer in a coal strike) and everyone was talking.

Their conversation differed little from the conversation in an hundred and one other gatherings of ex-service men in those early post-war days—those gatherings which have almost entirely died away (whereby hangs a tale, but never mind). In the main it centred round the two old topics, the two "grouses," that one could hear on every side. In the first place, they were lamenting the loss of the spirit that had been so glorious in war and had strangely disappeared with the return to "peace." Everyone seemed

to have gone back to the old game again of each man for himself—with the devil in his accustomed place. Class was beginning to face class again. The kind of distinctions that men had thought gone were raising their ugly heads again and the war that was to end war looked very much as if it had succeeded only in creating new forms of strife.

In the second place, they were realizing more desperately than ever before that the real loss of the war was not in broken house or broken bank balances, but in the terrific loss of the very best men. Death during the war seemed to our human minds to have worked with the most misdirected energy. Times past counting the casualty lists contained the names of just those very men who, one would have thought, were meant to build a better world; while those of us who were just average had been left.

But while these two subjects—the loss of men and the loss of that spirit—were the common talk of thousands at that time, the discussion in that London room differed from most of them in one respect. Though there were only a score of them with scarce as many pounds to spare they decided not merely to lament about it, but to do something constructive. One thing was certain—that to start a purely ex-service men's association was worse than useless.

How—they said—can we keep alive the spirit of fellowship and service that was the glory of those days of common action? How can we perpetuate it among the younger brothers of those Elder Brethren who played the game best and have gone onwards? Must we always have a war in order to produce the finest characteristics in our race; is there no way of perpetuating them in times of peace? And in regard to their second lament, they were asking the question, how can we hope to replace the men who by rights should be here to build this better world of which we have heard so much?

With these two questions in their minds they looked

round and were not long in finding a field of immense opportunity. They discovered the startling fact that upwards of 50,000 of this country's youth leave their home EVERY YEAR to go and live in lodgings in big cities; into Universities and shipyards, shops and offices. They did not need to discover the further fact—for they knew it—that lodgings are not just the most cheerful places in big cities. Here then were the younger brothers of those elder brethren in a new war, not so spectacular perhaps, but almost as real. The war of life in lodgings.

And so they decided to build some Talbot Houses, some equally cheerful lighthouses, in the industrial cities of our land. As a result of that decision there are to-day some seventy branches of Talbot House in England, and others scattered about the Empire. In Scotland there is one in Glasgow and one in Edinburgh.

One thing was plain from the start, that if they were to be really worthy of the old house then the three essential conditions must again be fulfilled :—All questions of class must be disregarded—the branch must seek to serve the community in which it is placed if it would really find the gift of fellowship—and thirdly the atmosphere must be definitely Christian (though nor perhaps "conventionally, "christian") if its real object was to be attained.

What is a Talbot House like? Very like the old place. It still remains "Everyman's club." Its membership is composed of ex-servicemen and those younger, who had not the privilege of service, the latter—by now—forming the majority. While it is mostly to men in lodgings that the biggest appeal is made, its doors are open equally to men who are fortunate enough to be living in their own homes. During the initial stages we meet together in a common clubroom. When the membership justifies it we "build" a house. The house becomes the centre of the Toc H activity. In it there live some twenty members of Toc H —who would otherwise be living in lodgings. These

twenty, following their ordinary avocations by day, live together regardless of class. They form the power-house of the larger membership who live without, but who use the house as their common club.

It takes a little time, of course, to build a fully-equipped lighthouse, but the activities in the preliminary club-room are very much the same. The club-room is open every night and once a week it has a guest night, when it attempts to gather all its forces. Men from Oxford enter on the same terms as men from Barlinnie—the terms being that they play the game in the spirit of Talbot House.

Of course, we are not quite so blind as to imagine that all men are equal. One has only to think of the tallest man you know and the shortest, the fattest and the thinnest, the most able and the most idiotic, to realize how meaningless that phrase is. But we do believe that in the things that really count men can best learn of other men, regardless of class. The man who has been fortunate in his education may have more knowledge, but it is probable that the man who has been knocked from pillar to post (and missed the education boat) has more courage. Knowledge and courage are both good things to have—in a place like Toc H, it becomes possible for all alike to share them.

Someone has called it a human zoo. All species will find an open door. On guest nights there is a good deal of roaring, as befits a zoo, and you can see the animals fed (indeed, you can become one of the animals at 3d. a head for food !). The point, of course, is that we all come out of our cages and remember that in reality we are all members of one jungle family. If you cage up for too long, in separate cages, animals who ought really to live together, they get quite unreasonably enraged with one another, until you would almost think they were a different species. That is what some people say is happening with the classes in our civilization to-day. Though it has not happened yet to the extent that some alarmists would

have us believe, there is little doubt that something like it will happen in the next ten years, unless steps are taken by many different people in many different ways—while there is still a chance of a natural jungle life.

What keeps us together? Every crowd must have something to keep it together. You cannot keep a football team together long without a football. There must be a common interest to keep a crowd of any kind of animals together. Nuts will attract monkeys and keep them together, so long as there are enough nuts. Meat makes lions forget their snarls and lie down together. And it is true of the human species. But you get away from monkeys and nuts—whatever Darwin may, or may not, have said—when honestly you think what keeps men together.

The highest kind of getting together among men—the fellowship of war—was born, as we have seen, of Sacrifice and Service. And it is common life-giving Service that alone will keep human beings together—and prevent misunderstanding. So it is that it is the especial care of Toc H to see how best it can serve the community in which it is placed. Not by starting new forms of service, but by trying to fit in where most we are needed. And what a deal there is to be done! For men who can lead boys, the B.B., the Scouts, and others, are crying out (do you know that the Scouts had to turn away thousands of boys in Boys' Week, simply for lack of leaders?) And there are many other things besides. Wounded ex-service men wanting "ordinary coves" to go and visit them. Boys who have got into trouble with the police, wanting "ordinary coves" to take an interest in them. Hospitals wanting their libraries organized. Blind people wanting to hear the wireless (which only wireless fans can erect), etc., etc.

There are jobs for everyone who really wants a job, and Toc H is a group of very average job-wanters. On

guest nights we get authorities, on almost every subject of interest, to come and talk informally of what needs doing in this undone world. We smoke pipes and hurl questions, and see if we can do anything about it. Even if we merely learn again the awful extent of our ignorance, the time is not misspent.

And so we seek to serve—and find fellowship thereby. And in the seeking and in the finding we believe we are raising up something in our midst, small though it be, that is a useful contribution to our day and generation. And now and again we raise up from our midst men who go out to do a job of work, however poorly. They are the jobs of work that would have been done by our Elder Brethren who were so much more capable of doing it—the men " of whom the world was not worthy."

We seek humbly to create a living War Memorial ; not something of brick and stone (be the workmanship never so exquisite), but something alive and eager and outgiving, something a little more representative of them, than ever brick and stone can be. " Death become creative in the lives of men to-day."

If we can hardly claim to be a lighthouse worthy of them, we at least claim to be lightships. We endeavour to maintain a Light that is steady, though its beam be hardly as bright.

The symbol of Toc H is a Light, the " Lamp of Maintenance." You remember the cry of a dying soldier ?

> " To you, with failing hands, we throw
> The *torch;* 'Tis yours to hold it high.
> If you break faith with those who die,
> We shall not rest, though poppies grow
> In Flanders' fields."

Toc H is a family of Torch Bearers—that THEY may rest. The Lamp is a replica of those used in the

catacombs of Rome by the early Christians, centuries ago, who stood steady in an alien world. The Cross is the "Double Cross" from the arms of Ypres—a town surely entitled to a double Cross upon its arms.

At the beginning of every guest night, the Lamp is lit and Toc H stands around it during a short interval of silence not unlike the two minutes' silence of Armistice Day—except that it is once a week and not once a year. During the silence we remember our Elder Brethren not hopelessly but thankfully, and we remember too the part that we must seek to play if truly we are to be one with them.

There's but one gift that all our dead desire;
One gift that men can give—and that's a dream—
Unless we too can burn with that same fire
Of Sacrifice, die to the things that seem.

Die to the little hatreds, die to greed,
Die to the old ignoble selves that once we knew,
Die to the base contempts of sect and creed,
And rise again like these, with souls as true.

And since they died before their task was finished,
Attempt new heights! Bring even their dreams to birth!
Build us that better world (Oh, not diminished
By one true splendour that they glimpsed on earth.)

And that's not done by sword, or tongue, or pen,
There's but one way. God make us better men.

Such is something of the Story of Toc H. Enough perhaps to show you how impossible it is to tell its story in words. If you would know more about it come and see it. If you would really "see" it, become part of it.

XII.—TOC H—GLASGOW

Since the last report, Toc H has made interesting experiments in Glasgow, and has proved that it is indeed possible for men of goodwill, with very differing outlook, to meet together and discuss without rancour many of their differences. Toc H is pledged to seek the mind of Christ in all things by loving widely and by thinking fairly in all that concerns the common weal. It is getting known in Glasgow, gradually, as a place where love has a witness and where thought is really open. Meeting weekly to hear Everyman's story, it is very rarely that it has found itself closing up before 11 p.m. It has listened to coal owners and coal miners ; to Fascists and to Socialists (and on the same night, too) ; to Trade Union leaders—and to Trade Union members ; it has gladly heard appeals for work from various organizations that to-day cry out for men, and in not a few cases it has found the man.

The kernel of the Toc H idea is not (as some people would still persist in believing) to open places where ex-servicemen may play billiards. It is a place open to all men. Sixty per cent. of its present active membership come from those who were too young to serve in the war, but who are prepared to do what they can to serve in the not necessarily easier fields of peace. It has no billiard table, and very rarely is there an evening when there are enough chairs. It seeks to perpetuate the spirit which made the war, despite the killing, a grand experience. By enlisting all and sundry, and by asking service of them, it succeeds (with the success that was Promised) in experiencing fellowship—a fellowship that is rarely spoken of but surely felt. That this "can happen" is proved to any one who was present among the sixty or so who gathered one night to hear a coal miner on the coal crisis. There were in the room a Colonel of the Regular Army,

a Captain of Territorials ; three Fascists ; two Socialists ; two men who have seen the inside of a prison, an ex-Borstal boy sitting beside a policeman; several unemployed, a clerk from the Unemployment Bureau quite near them ; a Cambridge man actually on the same form as an Oxford man; a padre and several who rarely go to church; and the rest from offices, shops, and works. The incidental fact that the coal miner failed to make an appearance did not deter the above-mentioned prosaic gathering from discussing something else for two hours and singing songs together for half an hour. This strange experience is possible because, while not actually all these were signed-on members of Toc H, there was a Toc H leaven amongst them—that is, men who through the movement are getting to know one another in individual and corporate service.

Toc H is finding personnel for four Boys' Clubs in Glasgow, which two years ago were hampered in their work for lack of men. Toc H is finding Scoutmasters.

It has ten men going round the houses of the blind in Glasgow keeping their wireless sets in order ; when they are out of order they are mended, for love, by a member of Toc H who has a wireless equipment shop.

Once a month, on a Saturday afternoon, it entertains crippled children in the Toc H rooms, and provides transport for them to and from their homes.

Toc H men organized and are running the only Rover Troop ever started among Borstal boys in prison. One member is tutoring another for a coming examination.

Toc H is not proud of all this. It is more aware of the things that are still to be done. Every man who joins Toc H understands what service is. At the ceremony of initiation he is asked, " What is service ? " and he replies, " It is the rent we pay for our room on earth."

It is thus reported on, because any one who is interested generally in the young men's problem will do well to study more fully the methods of Toc H.

The real justification for the Toc H method in Scotland is the disappearance of the Shorter Catechism as a household book. Thirty and forty years ago men were brought up with the tremendous First Question and Answer ringing in their ears. At least they knew OF their duty to God ; from it there issued in many cases their duty to their fellow-men. The youth that is the problem to-day has been given no fundamental basis at all ; his mind, regarding the Meaning of Life, is a chaotic jumble. But the youth to-day does understand words like " Fellowship " and " Service "—he knows a good deal about his duty to his fellow-men. The Toc H method is to take him where he is, and to let him experience in practice the possibilities and difficulties of these things. From the experience there does emerge a reawakened interest in First Causes, which it is the business of the padre in the group to develop and satisfy. It is a method that requires patience, but the results are permanent. If the method is to be given a fair chance, however, the experiment must be on truly Christian lines—that is, the service demanded must from the start have in it the element of a real challenge; the fellowship must have in it the element of risk. Certain organizations that are experimenting along these lines to-day are foregoing success by reason of the shallowness of the service they demand and the ease of the fellowship they create. To call on young men to deliver the Parish Magazine is hardly likely to lead them to a desperate search after first causes. To form a fellowship which by its atmosphere excludes the wanderer will neither affect the wanderer nor greatly change the participant. Dr Denney's incisive exclamation that " the Kingdom of God is not for the well-meaning, but for the desperate " is worthy of attention to-day if we would hold youth.

Toc H has never press-ganged men into attendance, but on different evenings during the course of the year it has had within its walls Borstal boys, the leader of a Glasgow razor-slashing gang, an ex-Communist, and one of Glasgow's

best-known pickpockets. In each case they have been brought by a friend of Toc H; but the point is that in no case have they failed to return of their own accord. How far we did them any good we do not know. We do know they did us good. The risk increases the fellowship.

1927

During the past year Toc H in Scotland has made progress; certainly lengthening its cords, and we hope strengthening its stakes. Glasgow Branch continues to do good work and to discover fresh avenues of Service. Edinburgh has increased its membership, and has approached something in the nature of a permanent home in having a room of its own. In addition, new Groups have been started in Aberdeen, in Coatbridge, in Greenock, and in Irvine.

The aim of the movement remains the same—to maintain among the younger generation a Knowledge of the Secret of Power that was delivered to the Saints who fell in those strangely happy "far off days of battles long ago." So many of those—whom we call the Elder Brethren—by joining the Army, ostensibly to do violence, stumbled amazedly into a quite unexpected realm of Good Fellowship; and, before ever they died, glimpsed something of the meaning of the Kingdom in their experience of a charity that knew no barriers and of a parity that shamed all patronage. And, of course, to glimpse anything means in some sense to be turned to it.

It is the purpose of Toc H to keep the avenue to that Secret green, carefully cultivating the same conditions of Fellowship and Service which War inevitably sowed on the less spectacular, but hardly less real battlefields of big cities. Toc H seeks to create places where patronage is shamed and charity is real: where men can meet together and keep their values true and their armour bright in the very urgency of the demands that are made of them. In the resultant, it is hoped, and sometimes it is proved, that

Younger Brethren may stumble on something of the meaning of the Kingdom.

While this article was being written a quite unexpected letter came to a member of Toc H. The young writer was at one time an ardent enough communist to have suffered imprisonment for his convictions, but over a year ago he turned at last to a true sense of Community—a Community that disdains not a King—by the Lodging-House Mission of the Church of Scotland. The missioner had cast about for some place where this young man might "feel the Kingdom about him" (as earlier he had so thrillingly felt the adventure of communism), and had honoured Toc H as being such a place. The young man came about Toc H for a time (quite penniless and out of work).

It is feared that the story does not go on like the usual "Annual Report." Certainly through our fault, partly perhaps through his, he did not quite find the Kingdom and drifted away; indeed, from vague reports it was apparent he had rather badly drifted. All Toc H attempts to regather met with a cold response. And then came this :—

". . . You will be surprised to hear from me," he writes (from an address which can also be found in the "Congested Areas of Glasgow" Report). "Not least I would thank you for my introduction to Toc H. I may state that I am going there every week again and enjoy it very much. I am not yet a member, but the moment I get a job I certainly will become one, because I think it is a glorious work. . . . The only thing lacking now is a job, but I have sufficient faith in God to believe that there are better times in store. I have really no more news at present except that I find the copy of Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible*, which Toc H gave me, and *which I have hung on to through all my latter troubles*, is very helpful."

"No more news," except that is News enough surely from a Glasgow ex-communist, who has been unemployed for a year.

XIII.—AUSTRALIA'S NEED

When, amid the flux of death that flowed on and over the awful salient, the friends of Gilbert Talbot seized upon his name as the symbol and embodiment of all they fain would have kept in memory, the men to whom the idea of Toc H first came were doing, I think you will agree, a good and gracious thing, and a wise thing also. For the history of these post-war years had proved abundantly how fatally easy it is for any generation to pass through a great experience and witness a great redemptive process and not be transfigured by it.

I remember in the somewhat bitter months which most of us experienced when we got back from the shambles, wondering somewhat wistfully whether we were going to get anything out of it, snatch anything lasting or beautiful to wrap round the soul of man. One must confess that one saw little of any answering dedication till this movement, called Toc H, appeared upon the scene. And so when Gilbert Talbot gave his name to Talbot House, that house which Love built among the ruins, at once an altar and a home, he started a movement that was described the other day by Robert Blatchford as "the sweetest, the most joyous, the most hopeful sign of these post-war times." More than this about Toc H as a movement it is not necessary, I think, for me to say now.

Perhaps, however, you will forgive me if, standing here in this central shrine of that great Commonwealth of Nations, in which we all are joined, I tell you something of the young country from which some of us have come, something of its deeper need and something of what, through Toc H, we hope to give to its young life.

The story of Australia, it has been well said, is one of the

real romances of the modern world. There it stands, an outpost of white civilization flung out into those southern seas, and in less than 150 years it has gathered within its spacious distances a larger proportion of Anglo-Saxon people than can be found in any other portion of the Anglo-Saxon world. At every stage in its brief dramatic rise towards nationhood this great country has been more than generous to those who answered to its challenge, and in every decade that generosity has been increased. In the early days, admittedly, its huge distances set a task to the early pioneers that may well have dismayed any smaller men, but even to them it was prodigal in the rich and glorious return it gave to the labour of their hands. The squatters, as the early pastoralists were called, following the blazed tracks of the first explorers, pushed their flocks and their herds into the fragrant pastures of the hinterland. Moving out from their coastal settlements came gradually the smaller men with their farm stock and their ploughs, the agricultural pioneers of that new nation that slowly but surely was coming into being. Thus passed the first seventy years or so. Then came the gold, and with its discovery an impetus was given to the development of Australia that was immediate and intense. Of a sudden the excited roar of the mining camps broke the vast stillnesses of the bush, and the first early tracks of the squatters became the busy highways, soon to be trodden by thousands of feet, hurrying onwards in their fierce race for wealth. These mining centres in their turn meant new and ample markets for all sorts of agricultural products, and so with the mining came a big agricultural advance. The era of manufacturing and industry followed, leading to the rise of the great cities, such as Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane. The first named has a population now of well over a million people. Twenty-five years ago the six Australian colonies federated into the Australian Commonwealth, and so there came into being a vigorous young nation, possessing a

continent more than three million square miles in area, embracing every variety of soil and climate from the kindly temperatures of the southern ocean to the amazing riches of the tropical north. Then came the war with its immense challenge to the Anglo-Saxon spirit throughout the world. How the Australian spirit answered to that challenge is a matter of history, and is well known to you all. England saw it and was glad.

> "I am their Mother and as such they love me,
> Whitening the ocean as they hasten home.
> To what unutterable love they move me.
> I called them not. I called them not. They come!"

Australia, out of a population of, as it then was, considerably less than six millions, enlisted over 400,000 men and left 60,000 of her children on the slopes of Gallipoli and the fields of Palestine and France. Swift and great, surely, has been the rise of this young Commonwealth to nationhood, and swifter still, given industrial peace, will be her amazing development during the next two or three generations. Though much undeveloped country still remains, the roughest of the pioneering has already been done, and the field is now clear in Australia for the development of wealth production on a really great scale.

But some of us in Australia realise that material growth is not enough. Three things are needed in every building, and they are needed as much in the building of a nation as in the building of a house. You need the right material, you need room to build, and you need the right foundation. Some of us think that Australia has the first and second of these three, but that she has yet to learn the last. She certainly has the right material so far as quality of human stock and its native capacities are concerned. Ninety-eight per cent. of the population of Australia is of purely British stock, the descendants, that is to say, of those whom we may reasonably describe as at least among the most adventurous

portion of the British race, those who had the bravery and the enterprise to cross the wide oceans, taking their fate in their hands, to found a new England across the seas. We have quite obviously in Australia, for the purposes of nation building, magnificent human stuff, raw material of the finest type, not without a nascent idealism, groping and unguided it may be and threatened by what the Psalmist calls "The sickness that destroyeth in the noon day." Submerged it may be by too much comfort and prosperity, but still there and always there, waiting for the magic touch that can wake it into life. Australia has certainly the room to build; her wide spaces can carry a population, we may reasonably say, of one hundred millions, in which at present there are six. In that great State known as Western Australia there are at present only 375,000 people. It has astonished gatherings of English folk when one has told them that they are carrying four times as many people on the dole in England as there are men, women and children in the whole of Western Australia. In Australia there is certainly room to build. What, however, Australia has still to learn to-day is a clear conception of what are the real foundations of an abiding national life. Australia has yet to learn that her real wealth does not consist in flocks and herds, in acres and in shares, but in her humanity. Admittedly the Australian type has all the capacity and the possibility of real greatness, but there is an ancient proverb that says, "*Corruptio optimi pessima*"—the worst thing in the world is the corruption of the best, or, as one of your English poets has put it, not, of course, in this connection, "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." That, too, is true of Australia, and it explains much that has happened and is still happening in the life of Australia that those who do not know us fail to understand. More lovable, generous and warm-hearted people than the Australians are not to be found anywhere in the world, nor are their capacities of mind or body less than these great qualities

of heart. What we have, however, still to learn out there is this, that what is on us is considerably less important than what is in us, that in the life of a nation, things like education and religion, the things of the mind and the things of the spirit, do immensely count ; that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us as is also the Kingdom of Hell; that the meek do inherit the earth, strange as it may appear, or at all events anything in the earth that is worth inheriting. Australia does indeed stand to-day on the verge of a future that is almost dazzling as well as tantalizing in its promise. She may yet be the new centre of gravity of a white civilization holding up the flag of a spiritually white Australia and of a Christian civilization in a new Pacific home. This is the real destiny for which Australians should be girding themselves and to which they should be reaching out, consecrating themselves to this great high task. No dedication quite answering to this is yet nearly articulate in her national life; ambitious and self-confident is its mood, healthy enough in its form, but not yet nearly rich enough in its filling, and liable to be absorbed in local view-points and internal problems. Australians have not yet learned to think in terms of the world's larger life or of that world process in which they have to play their part. Eager, expectant, forward looking, like some anxious maiden she "leans o'er the wistful limit of the world," consciously dedicated as yet to no selfless world task. Amazingly confident, as is her general mood, her finest spirits are, however, conscious not only of the opportunity that is beckoning, but also of the considerable danger of its being missed. Australia must learn to do two things and never till she learns them will she reach the stature of real nationhood. She must learn to work and she must learn to worship. The promise of her industrial and commercial future, great as it is, is threatened to-day with the possible paralysis of all her corporate effort by the poison of class bitterness and class hate. Australia, too, must find, and find quickly, some-

thing she can worship, some religion she can follow, some shrine before which she can bow the knee and burn the incense of her heart's devotion. Who of us can doubt that it will be at Christ's feet that Australia will learn those austerities and those refinements which may need adding, which do need adding, to the more primal splendours of will and body that the war revealed? And in Toc H some of us are trying in Australia to help the Church to present the faith of Christ in its beauty, wholeness and simplicity to this young race. Such a witness as we purpose in Toc H coming, not from the old but from the young, would be a formidable thing to those who in Australia, as elsewhere, foretell apparently with equanimity the downfall of religion. And we purpose to make that witness in Australia. We started making it on 29th September of last year, when, in the presence of a vast congregation from all parts of the Commonwealth, the rushlights of twenty-two groups were lit from the Forster Lamp in Newcastle Cathedral.

Will you pray, therefore, with me this evening for the growth of this young movement, standing, as it does, for fun and fairmindedness, for humour and holiness, for spreading the Gospel without preaching it, for Christianity in action, for the conquest of hate, for every reasonable dedication to which the Elder Brother and the Elder Brethren call us? Will you pray for this movement, not only in England, but also in this far Dominion, where we so sorely need it in our vivid, confident, materialistic young life, that by Toc H we may help to capture that Australian spirit, so splendid in its war-time sacrifices, and harness its fiery energies to the service of the Light?

XIV.—THE CHRISTIAN BASIS OF TOC H

At the request of the founder padre of Toc H, I am speaking in some of the churches of England on certain aspects of the young movement which has brought us these many thousands of miles to that England which first gave it to our Australian shores. It would be quite impossible for me, and indeed it is unnecessary, to try to tell you all for which this movement stands. But you are members of the Christian Church, and men and women to whom from time to time we shall be appealing in Toc H for prayer, for sympathy and for practical support.

And there is one question that you have a right to ask and which we have a right to answer as clearly as we can. It is this. What is the religious accent of Toc H? What are its Christian stresses? What is the place and what the importance attached in Toc H to the distinctively Christian aspect of its life? Some clear thinking on this subject is necessary, too, from the point of view of the inner life of the movement itself. Nothing is more vital to Toc H and its continued existence on its own characteristic plane than a strong insistence on its distinctively Christian aspects. Herein lies its real dynamic. Other societies stand as a sad warning of the progressive enfeebling that comes to a movement that suffers its Christianity to become filleted and reduced.

On the other hand, nowhere can it more easily be wrecked than on the rocks of fanatical or sentimental religiosity. Some of us know too well just what this danger means. Fortunately, for those of us who are trying to arrive at some clear conclusions on this matter, Peter Monie, in the *Toc H Journal*, has given us one starting-point at least that may well dictate our general attitudes.

In that profound article, entitled "Facing both Ways," he lays down the principle that Toc H as a movement should and must stand, quite frankly, "facing both ways." It represents at one and the same time the open door of Everyman's club and, on the other hand, a definite dedication to things concerning which, for the most part, Everyman is largely indifferent to-day. On the maintenance of this dual emphasis and devotion, the continued and useful existence of Toc H as something distinctive would appear very largely to depend. We have many societies, some ancient and some modern, which develop one attitude or the other of these two. But we are strangely poor in movements which manage to maintain them both. Humour and holiness, religion and humanism, worship and service are only rare bedfellows. Their rarity is one of many justifications for the existence of Toc H, and Toc H will be well advised to be extraordinarily stubborn in this saving synthesis. Within the general limits suggested by it, we may further say that Toc H is as wide as, and must be kept as wide as, Christianity itself.

It represents no self-chosen spiritual aristocracy, no closed circle of self-satisfied pietistic folk who have established a corner in the things of God. Across and barring its portals there stands no doctrinal test and no outward test of spiritual attainment. But while it is as wide as Christianity, we say, in Australia at all events, that it is no wider. There are some people who will object to this, and to their objection there can be only one reply. It is indeed, as the same article suggests, that, in all societies, the right of the individual to be free must give way always to the duty of the society to be itself. No one has the right to demand membership of a society on the condition that it turns itself, for his particular benefit, into something else.

Toc H, then, is most definitely committed to the religious method. It believes that it is a law of spiritual as well as of practical hydraulics, that you must have a source higher than your tap. Ideals, we say, are rather like

cheques. Cheques are quite useful commodities so long as there is something in the bank, but they are rather apt to be mere scraps of paper if the bank be empty. And ideals are just cheques upon the Bank of Heaven. In other words, we do need in the last resort some assurance that our ideals are not mere wishes ; that there is that at the heart of things which makes them real; that there is that at the heart of things which makes our dreams come true. And so if we would serve the world, we have to pass beyond the world. If we would bring men really usefully to their feet, we must bring them first of all to their knees. While we believe that the world can get on astonishingly well without sectarianism, we also believe, rightly or wrongly, in Toc H, that it simply cannot get on without religion. We believe that what we call ethics are not enough.

Toc H, moreover, is quite definitely committed to the Christian method. Its religion, quite frankly, is the religion of Christ and the religion of the Cross. Its standards are Christ's standards ; its values are Christ's values. It is a society that is trying to teach men to enter into the mind of Christ and to look with his eyes on the world. We believe that in this religion of the Cross is the one sufficient answer to the problems of society and to all the question marks of human life ; that in this religion of the Cross, were we only brave enough to apply it, would be the solution of all our failures and our feebleness, all our divisions and all our hates.

In seeking, moreover, to present Christ's will to the world, Toc H stands first of all for a protest and, secondly, for a recovery. It registers first of all a protest against that monotonous and vicious circle that takes a man from the pew to the altar, or whatever corresponds to the altar in his religious system, and from the altar to the pew without anything very tangible ever coming of it, till the poor chap tires of the process and gives up the whole effort of being a Christian in weariness and disgust.

It stands also for a recovery, attempting, as it does, to recapture certain lost stresses in the Christian life. Christianity, it reminds us, is first and foremost a matter of giving and not a matter of receiving. It feels, in the first place, that the Founder of Christianity, were He to come among us, would be appalled at much of our modern pew-Christianity. He would not be impressed with the Christianity that consists merely in sitting on a well-padded pew and listening to the singing of a glorious choir. He would apply the acid test—What service are you rendering?—What muscle are you spending?—What blood are you spilling?—What good are you doing? "My meat" He said, "is to do the will of Him Who hath sent me and to finish His work." From one point of view Christ's work is finished. But from another aspect it is never finished, and the only real Christians are the people who are finishing it with Him. It is for us to fill up the measure of His sufferings, nay, more, to have a share in His Atonement till the whole world comes to crown Him, as we within the Church have crowned Him, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Secondly, Toc H desires to remind a class-conscious generation, and a sometimes class-conscious Church, that we shall never get a new birth of fellowship in the social order till that fellowship takes root and witness in the Christian Church. The blind cannot lead the blind. There will have to be far more fellowship among Christians themselves if we are ever to lead the world into better things to-day. Only in Christian congregations and in such Christian movements as Toc H, it seems reasonable to suppose, shall we ever get the beginnings of that richer fellowship on the coming of which the future of the classes and nations really waits. It is for this re-birth of fellowship that we are striving in Toc H, because we feel that it must be someone's job to make a start at conquering hate, and, in particular, that it must be part of the Christian job to-day.

This modern generation is strangely given to confusing fire with flame. There is a Hell and there is a Heaven assuredly, and the one is a conflagration of evil passion, just as the other is the same fire converted into flame, controlled and disciplined in the Lamp of Sacrifice. The last bitter struggle of the nations, which has robbed this generation of so many of its rarest lives, was just a wild conflagration of hatred and suspicion. And there is still enough of the inflammable in every one of us to repeat the blaze a thousandfold. The fires are still smouldering, too, not only between the nations, but also between class and class. A relentless alternative faces us to-day. Either it is going to be the Lamp of love and service and sacrifice, or else the old, old riot of selfish incendiary hate. That is the alternative that Toc H is seeking to set before the young minds of the Churches and the young minds of the race.

There is, moreover, another recovery for which Toc H is standing, and that is for something of the lost radiance as well as the lost kindness and gladness of the Christian life.

Toc H does represent, some of us feel, in this direction, a real emancipation of the living spirit of Christianity for which we have been waiting for some considerable time, a recovery of something of the " first fine careless rapture " of those early Christian days. This Christianity of ours ought to be a joyful business. It ought to be something that is going to make us radiant, kind and glad. So many of our modern Christians are so desperately sad about the whole business. They try in a despairing kind of way to " teach religion," forgetting that religion, as a matter of fact, is never so much " taught " as " caught," and their own religion is not infectious oftentimes, for the simple reason that they have never had a strong enough dose of it to make it catching. There are good Christians one has met who remind us irresistibly of dogs on chains. Their goodness is less a glorious adventure than a wretched incarceration, and, being themselves perforce upon a chain, they keep up a kind of intermittent snarl as a protest against

other people being free. Let the men who come forth from our Churches be big-hearted people. They ought to be if they come forth from the Presence. Clean they must be admittedly, but let them be positive and not merely negative in their cleanness. Let them be virile, magnanimous, human and sincere, free from harshness, narrowness, cruelty and cant. All this, too, is part of the forgotten stress which we are endeavouring to recover in Toc H, making of it a school of discipleship for the Christian Churches in which men may find again the radiance and the kindness of lives that have been freely given.

> Not the waste drops of thy cup overflowing.
> Not the faint sparks from thy hearth overglowing.
> Not a pale bud from the June roses blowing.
> Give as He gave unto thee, Who gave thee to live.
>
> Pour out thy love like the rush of a river,
> Wasting its sweetness for ever and ever,
> Through the burnt sands that reward not the giver.

Toc H, however, in protesting against a worship without service, will be ill-advised to slip into the conception of service without worship. To do this will be to reduce it to the level of a thousand-and-one goodwill societies abroad to-day. There is much idealism abroad in these times, but much of it is powerless, just because it hitches its wagon to no star. Toc H, we must always remember, takes its stand finally, not by an unknown warrior's grave, but by a known Christ's Throne. It is more than remembrance of the Elder Brethren; it is a living union with the Elder Brother, and, through Him, with the Elder and the Younger Brethren all. That is why in Toc H we do not range ourselves alongside those tiresome amateurs who announce from time to time the approaching demise of organized Christianity, the funeral of which, incidentally, appears to be interminably postponed, and themselves as its heaven-sent successors. We believe rather with

G. K. C. that Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, but, on the other hand, found hard and not tried, and Toc H proposes to spread the Gospel without preaching it, an experiment which it considers is considerably overdue.

Toc H cannot define too closely its attitude to the Churches. While refusing, for obvious reasons, to identify itself with any particular section of Christendom, it does not, and it will not, join hands with those superior moderns who regard the Churches as harmless and picturesque survivals to be passed superciliously over by upstart social service organizations about two thousand years their junior. Still less does it regard them as institutions to be first starved and then called dead, a favourite modern gesture, but rather as ancient societies that for some considerable time have been holding up an ideal of worship without which human nature would soon slip back to the nakedness of its animal origins, institutions to be supported at all events by people who find them good enough to be buried from and married in, and who profess a moral code which has been largely created and sustained by those very societies which they are so given to belittling.

Toc H, then, will not fail to keep the note of worship at the heart and centre of its life. So it was in the "Old House," so is it also when at every meeting we light the Lamp which He lit first of all, and join in those prayers in which the family lifts up its heart to God. This, too, is the significance of the little chapels which so often in the Marks are in the cellars and the tiny crypts, the hidden yet strong foundations on which the structure of the family-life is made to rest. So often, surely, we approach the question of our ideals from the wrong angle. We treat of them as human necessities instead of as Divine realities, whereas the first and the fundamental reason why they are the one is just because they are the other. They are human necessities in the first resort because they are Divine realities, Divine decisions which we must endorse and honour and obey.

For, as Christians, the ideals we seek to realize are not of our own making. They are not, first and foremost something we achieve ourselves, but something existing in the unseen and Eternal order and manifest in Jesus in the world of Time. If our fellowship is to endure, it must have this basis in the unseen order. Friendship is either a mush of concessions, or else it is part of the constructive genius of the Universe. We need this assurance and the capacity also to draw on that unseen world for strength and inspiration, which is part at least of what worship means. If those values which dictate our human attitudes are to hold us, we must feel and know that they are God's values too. And so it is that as we come to tackle fellowship or service either, if our decisions and our dedications are to have fervour, fire and passion, we must desire fellowship and work for fellowship, not because we cannot get on without it, not because our industrial efficiency is lessened by its absence, but just because it is the will of Heaven for us men. Toc H must be "God's show." This is not to say that the great majority of men, perhaps, will come to fellowship by a lowlier way. That is what the Founder Padre meant when he told us once that fellowship was always a by-product, the *gift* of God, indeed, to men who were linking hands up hill. But the sequence is a *gift* and the gift is from above. In other words, fellowship and service, both, are by-products of some higher thing. Vision, in the last resort, is the archway through which men pass to both. It is when we look at Christ and see in Him the Sacrament of God's will for men that we set our hands and hearts to bring into our human relationships that love which built the house of our faith among the ruins of the bloody salient, and to build the larger House of Love among the sons of men.

So in Toc H we shall stand tenaciously for the religious method, and keep before us as the highest type of Toc H energy and humanism, the life that is hid with Christ in God. Only then can Toc H preserve its distinctive

witness. Other societies, too numerous to mention, stand for business ethics, for social service, for moral codes of varying dullness. We have prophets innumerable of brotherhood and goodwill, moral utopias and panaceas galore tumble over each other, proclaiming each in strident tones that the world needs bettering and that they have the secret of its betterment. Art has its devotees, education its enthusiasts. Largely speaking, only the Church is found to-day standing for worship, and Toc H may well join hands with her in this regard. She may indeed do much, in her own characteristic way, to win men to a conviction that worship has a place in human life.

Toc H will have its own way of bringing this conviction home, and the Churches will be wise to bestow upon its experimental methods an attitude of patience, faith and understanding. We are getting out to this idea of worship in Toc H, but we are doing it in our own way, and we must be allowed to try it out. There is much conviction needed on the matter, and not least among the younger generation. The Church, it may be well to understand, in standing for worship, is challenged explicitly or implicitly by the vast majority of men to-day. Even where he is not articulately sceptical, but pays a certain surface respect to the outward ordinances of organized religion, your average man to-day has somewhere at the back of his mind the fixed idea that, of all things in the community working for its betterment, the altar can most easily be done without. Ethics, he will tell you, are the only things that matter. Religion, in the long run, is an individual's own affair, and, anyhow, it is not among the things that cannot be done without. And the same average man wants disillusioning on this matter, and it is not the least part of the job of Toc H, as some of us see it, to assist, in its own way, in this disillusionment.

The motto of my old school was *Ora et labora*, Do thou pray and work. Worship without work is barren. Work without worship is dead. "In prayer,"

says St. Ignatius, "pray as if everything depended upon God. In work, work as if everything depended on yourself." In this twofold formula, in the long run, will be found the technique of a real achievement.

The men who have saved the world before and who will save it again have been the men who have lived in contact with both worlds, open to the voices and the pulls that have come from each. It is the mystics who have been the great achievers and the greatest workers have been the greatest worshippers. Christ told us this a long time ago, and the world has since found it out. This reminder, some of us hope, will be not the least part of "the humble witness" of Toc H. It will not push worship in any artificial way. Some "teachers of religion" are doing that already. It will not stand for any hothouse forcing of the pietistic instinct, or press for an expression that outruns experience, but, in its own way, it can do much to-day to win men to that worship for which the Church not always successfully pleads to-day. This particular recovery is one of our sorest needs.

It is significant, at all events, that the generation that has witnessed the eclipse of worship, has also witnessed a lowering of standards, a degradation of work and a cheapening of life that is the concern of all thoughtful men to-day. No increase, and no perfecting of the mechanism of life or the comforts of living is a worthy compensation for the loss of life's elevations and life's fidelities. The important thing, after all, is not what happens to the outside of things, but what happens to the inside of people. Toc H, therefore, must "change chaps," and man lives and changes still by wonder and by worship, by admiration, hope and love. To lose these things in the long run will be to lose all that is characteristically human about us, and drift back to the ape and the tiger, the ooze and the slime. We must go on worshipping, if we are to go on living. No mere sweating over jobs can take the place

of that recovery. Perspiration cannot do the job of inspiration.

Toc H, therefore, will be wise to stand for worship in a world that is in danger of belittling it, for not only the open door of Everyman's Club, but for a devotion also to the things to which Everyman to-day, for the most part, is indifferent. The altar, and all that goes with it, is not an anachronism. It is still a vital necessity for any life that is to attain any elevation, any summits, or any dignities.

Love took up the harp of life and smote on all its chords with might.
Smote the chord of self that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

And most of us will need our hours of worship if the Master-Hand is to go on striking any sort of music from our souls and lives. Toc H, in this regard, must be "as full of music" as it can be. Christianity, anyhow, has died many times; and just as often has risen again, not because it was worthy or respectable or good-natured, but because of its Divine dynamics and the worship that kept them in its life.

"Sooner or later," says Mr. Chesterton, "the critics of the Faith will learn from their incessant disappointments, not to look for anything so simple as its death." So also will it be with that Christian worship and that Elder Brother before whom it bows the knee. They may watch for it to stumble, and they may watch for it to err, as indeed they see it erring and stumbling in our day. They will no longer watch for it to end. They will learn instinctively "to look first for the coming of the comet, or the freezing of the star." And some of us are looking to Toc H to assist materially in this particular disillusionment.

XV.—A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AT MANCHESTER

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.—John viii. 12.

To-day we are celebrating a "Festival of Light." The two uppermost thoughts in our minds are the claim of Jesus: "I am the Light of the World," which thankfully and whole heartedly we admit; and the glorious privilege and great responsibility of His lovers and servants, of whom He said, "Ye are the light of the world."

The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the "Light of the World." Before His appearing, Darkness brooded over the faces of the peoples. Human kind wandered helplessly and hopelessly, bewildered, stumbling, fearful and lost in the deep night of ignorance, selfishness and sin. There was no certain knowledge of God; society was selfish and corrupt; there was no assured help for the way of life and no hope for the hereafter. The peoples sat in darkness and the shadow of death.

In our world's deepest darkness Christ came. "The dayspring from on high hath visited us, to shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; to guide our feet into the way of peace." But the light did not illuminate the whole world suddenly, with startling overpowering effect; not as light came in response to our Creator's "let there be light," flooding the world and driving away the darkness that brooded over the face of the waters; not as, after eclipse, the rays of the sun flash forth and shadows flee away. Light has come, we live in a new world. In that light men live, but by no means all have seen the Light. They have not beheld for them-

selves the "Light of the World" and been thrilled by His radiance and glory. He stands at the door and knocks, but men choose darkness rather than light; there is no admittance for Him who is the Light. Men's eyes are holden that they do not see Him.

What is conversion? Is it not turning to the Light? What is the Christian life? Is it not seeing and following the Lord Jesus Christ? Is not the true Christian he whose face is turned to Jesus, and the direction of whose life is Christward? It is in "looking unto Jesus" that we see the light and walk in it.

Much is involved in this simple act of looking unto Jesus! The turning of the face to the light necessitates the turning of the back on darkness. A deliberate turning away, whatever the cost may be, from darkness and all that it stands for. Right-about turn from the pursuit and peril of sin. No truck with it, no truce with it; Christ is the antithesis of sin and selfishness. It is one or the other. It cannot be both. Face the light, or face darkness. Choose the lighted way or the shadowed way. Having chosen Christ as the aim and goal of life, and the Christ-lit way as the road of life, count all things loss and press on toward the mark unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There is light ahead, its glory beckons. The back has been turned on darkness, therefore cast off the work of darkness and put on the armour of light.

Of course, we can choose darkness if we will. Forward to the light or turn our back on it and we shall walk in darkness. The path of life will be shadowed, but the shadows are of our own making. They deepen and darken as we get farther away from the light. We cannot throw the responsibility on God. We have only ourselves to blame. We have deliberately turned our back on the light. Darkness and the darkening way are our own choice. Face the light, and the path of life is a lighted way. It is like the path of moonlight over the sea.

Let there be wild waves or waters of quietness, we follow a lighted way, and, as we steadfastly pursue it, the path grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."

How much the pillar of fire by night meant to Israel in its wanderings in the wilderness. The path of life, during long years and changing circumstances, was clear. With such a guide the wayfarers knew no darkness, even in the darkest night. Following it they could not make a mistake.

The Light is given not for self-absorbed contemplation, not merely for guidance and direction, but for progress and action. It is not only to be looked upon in its glory; not only to be followed, so making the road of life a heavenly way; but to be received. The light not only shines, but illuminates. The fire not only glows, but warms and kindles. It is a tragic possibility that we may ourselves be darkness to others, shadowing, hiding, confusing, hurting. But "looking unto Jesus," our faces and lives become lightened, so that, in our turn, we become as lights in the world. In Christ's own word, we are "the light of the world." We "were once darkness but are now light in the Lord." Let us therefore walk as children of the light, for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. He imparts His glory. He dwells in the heart by faith. And if He dwells in us, His face will be seen in some of the windows of our being. His glory will manifest itself through our frail flesh. They beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Men will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

Let us never forget that the only ending of darkness is light. Light alone can dispel darkness. We can't talk darkness away or preach it away. It flies before light. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify our father which is in heaven."

XVI.—LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

The years since the Armistice of 1918 have really been years very much like any others. But to most of us, perhaps, they have seemed to be especially significant because of the lurid background of the four years of the war. To men who had suffered then, the disappointment of continued industrial struggle and widespread unemployment was tinged with a particular bitterness. To those who had dreamed dreams of a world miraculously better through the purgation of war, the waking to the return of familiar disputes and the struggles which selfishness involves, was dismaying.

As usual, people reacted to these circumstances in one of three ways. Either they became passionately or even fiercely eager for some revolutionary change, or they sought to forget the difficulties of their time in a rush of pleasure, or else they despaired of doing any good and simply busied themselves with their own little concerns, dumbly toiling or carelessly floating with the general current.

Toc H stands out among the movements of the time as almost unique in its endeavour to render permanent all that was best in the temper of the years of war, to apply to the slow and laborious task of rebuilding a ruined world, the camaraderie, the sacrifice, the courage that had been, if anything could be, the redemption of war. It is not alone in preaching service. That with all serious-minded persons has become almost a tiresome cliché. It is not alone in promoting fellowship and gaiety. Most people desire that. It is not alone in providing a religious basis. The world is full of religious societies, aiming at the betterment of conditions. But few movements, if any, have so clearly aimed at combining the three ideas of fellowship, service and faith.

To some observers, Toc H seems simply a movement to band together young men in a sort of happy-go-lucky brotherhood; to others it appears to be a sort of queer mission to youth. Others again only know it as an organization to which one may apply to get some sort of a social job done.

It is not certain that even the men in the movement are clear about it. Some become aware of it by being admitted as hostellers in a Mark. Some come rather casually to a Guest Night and come again, gradually becoming more and more interested as they take on more jobs. Even so, only a very few are more than dimly aware of its definitely religious basis. They feel, no doubt, that there is a certain reality and freshness about its prayers, a certain spiritual tug in its ceremony of Lighting the Lamp, and there is a curious glamour of romance about it which they shyly feel, and secretly find their hearts welcoming.

But in truth the very heart of Toc H is its confession of faith. It is a religious movement or nothing. Without that, its laughter becomes hollow, and its service shallow. Three difficulties stand in the way of a clear and general recognition of the religious basis. First, youth is inarticulate. It cannot easily express its religion. Toc H quite definitely does not aim at producing a band of men who are glibly religious. They are invited to "spread the gospel without preaching it."

For myself, I cannot see how anyone cannot recognize the wisdom of this as a rule of general application. It does not mean that the man who has the gift of speech cannot use it as his Toc H job. It means that the ordinary member is called to witness by deeds rather than by words, to show in his general behaviour, by his generosity, and self-control, his willingness to serve others and deny himself, that he recognizes and applies in life a Power that is not of himself.

In the second place, we are all hampered by certain

religious conventions, which are indeed conventional, and not at all religious. Toc H was born in circumstances which rent convention to shreds, and its endeavour to be sincere must always conflict with the purely conventional. There will be, therefore, always critics who cannot see its religious side at all, and there will always be members who fear any expression of religion lest it should lead to conventionality. But no religion can be healthy that has no expression as such. No amount of doing jobs can be a full and adequate expression of religion. Toc H is, therefore, always in a position of some delicacy in the matter of expression of its religious basis.

Thirdly, Toc H aims at being everyman's club. It is not for the men of the Church of England purely. Still less for men of one type of Churchmanship. This difficulty applies particularly in the matter of Holy Communion. Probably all the members long to meet together at God's board, but to do that would be to run ahead of the churches, and to found what would be, in effect, a new Church.

It is well to face without flinching these difficulties. They have already been faced and met with remarkable skill. The simple ceremonial of the Lamp Lighting, the fresh sincerity of the forms of prayer drawn up for the birthday celebrations, the deep and searching summons of the League of the Lamp of Maintenance, are all evidence of remarkable achievement.

Yet for the majority of members there is still need of a clearer understanding that Toc H does not simply invite men to join a club, or do a job, but does call them to confess and practise the Christian faith in their lives.

Is there any way by which this clear call can be made to sound an even more certain note ?

I submit that the way is to emphasize again and again that the remembrance of the Elder Brethren is an invitation to lift up our hearts to the heavenly places where the

spirits of our Elder Brethren adore Him Who is their Captain and ours. The Lighting of the Lamp is not a preliminary ritual and an act of momentary reverence. It is meant to translate the whole action of the meeting, whether guest night, or committee, or celebration to a higher sphere where, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we praise and magnify and serve Him whom we address as Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.

This is indeed a high and austere ideal. It is the Christian ideal. How necessary it is for Toc H, a few particular instances will show. First, Toc H aims at binding in a fellowship of Christian service men of very various circumstances. For some of them the Public School has done much already to foster an esprit de corps—but in a very limited circle of ideas. For others life hitherto has been a mere battlefield of individual aims. How otherwise can the rich and highly educated man call the ignorant and unemployed man down at heels his brother? How else can the native spirit of criticism and censure, the deeply ingrained readiness to suspect tyranny and ulterior motives be overcome? What but the sense of the Presence of the Master of us all can teach us to bear with one another, to defer to one another?

Again, jollity is an essential feature of the common life of Toc H. But how is jollity to be kept clean? What is to secure it from being coarsened or degraded? It is essential to preserve the light-heartedness of courage, the laughter of hope. But the unclean jest or sordid story are just typical of those subtle influences which destroy the courage and the hope of the Christian endeavour. "Salt is good," but nothing will preserve the freshness of the salt but a real religion.

Once again, a difficulty which all movements like Toc H have to face is the difficulty of sustaining service. Many a man, in the glamour of admission, promises to do a job. But the call of pleasure often conflicts with the

call of the job. And unless the man is upheld by a sense of vocation the job suffers. Here again, the essential thing is the sense of religion. For in Toc H he is bidden to do it, not with eye service as man pleasing, but unto God.

I have spoken of the necessity of religion for the healthy life of Toc H in terms which may seem to indicate that religion is a valuable means to the end which is humanitarian. That is, indeed, a fashionable way of regarding religion. It is, indeed, quite extraordinarily mistaken. It is not unnatural that when men feel so keenly the pressure of external conditions they should think of religion as a means of improving those conditions. It is natural for men to think of religion as subserving their own ends. But the law of our life, if we could only see it, is that we should come to partake of the life of God. He is our end. To worship, love and serve Him is our only royalty and liberty.

Toc H would be merely emphasizing a wholly untrue view of religion if it called on men to lift up their hearts only in order that they might learn how to make the world a better place or their own lives happier. It calls on them to lift up their hearts to find their true life in God, and then in the strength of that life to win their brethren by fellowship and service.

Let me put it in a kind of allegory. We regard as symbols of sovereignty and beauty those hard and expensive gems which we call diamonds. Some men lust after them, to others they seem the very symbols of all that is glitteringly worthless and costingly deceptive in life. But once I have seen a great heap of diamonds in a setting that gave them new significance. They lost nothing of their sparkle, they spoke significantly of expense, for in clusters numbering hundreds they were set like the rays of a central sun or the petals of a stupendous flower at whose heart was the consecrated Symbol of our Redemption and our Life. The glittering jewels of a

costly monstrance lent all their many-coloured fires to surround with worship the Host that told of a Life laid down, a Body bruised and broken, that many brethren might be brought to shine as stars around the throne of the Son of God's love.

XVII.—SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—Isaiah xxxii. 2.

The supreme need of our generation is for the leadership of creative personalities. Professor Graham Wallas has lately pointed out how Democracy involves the scaling down of values, the standardization of thinking, and the pressure everywhere of herd suggestion. All the forces of society to-day are antagonistic to individuality; and on all sides, in the Press and in our Amusements, we have Mass-production in thought, and the increasing mechanization of life tends inevitably to produce a generation of Babbits. We must somehow find people sufficiently creative to stand out against this pressure, and to be the leaders of our generation. Democracy without leadership will prove a dungeon worse than any tyranny.

All of us are, in some way, in posts of spiritual leadership. It is not our choice or fault. You cannot *make* leaders, God creates them; but everybody can do something to achieve a working competence in leadership. We can learn it in the school of Christ. The Apostles never ceased to be disciples; all through they were students in the school of Jesus.

Some men are born leaders, others achieve leadership, most have it thrust upon them! It is the function of leaders to lead, that is, to know where they are going, and this implies a fundamental certainty about fundamental things. Jesus called the clergy of His day blind guides leading blind men. That would not have mattered so much, but they said "We see"; therefore, Jesus said,

"Your sin remaineth." There must always be a wide margin of agnosticism in any genuine religion; but wavering at the core of our faith we are lost.

In the modern world no authority is taken for granted, it has to be *earned*. The only recognized divine right title to leadership comes from having something to express—some clear vision to which we would point men, some contagious power of inspiration. The great Christian leaders had it direct from the Source. People taste the water made wine, and know not whence it is: but *the servants that drew the water knew*. That is the supreme fact about Jesus: He is so radiantly *alive*, always recreating men's spirits. Nobody ever came into His presence without feeling rejuvenated, and afterwards carrying with him, as he went, some delegated power of creativeness. Only there, "in Christ," can it be found.

In the test of life any other equipment fails. We all know men who, in speech and bearing, conscientiously "register" leadership. Rarely do they deceive us. Intuitively we know it is but a foolish attempt to compensate for the lack of the one essential thing. Similarly an excessive emphasis on the authority of priesthood is only one more item in the repertory of an "inferiority complex." The true spiritual leader is he who regards himself as fellow-traveller and fellow-seeker after God rather than as official guide in uniform. Every Christian is "priest" to his brothers: and the true priest starts even as Jesus did by identifying himself with his people, with their doubts and fears no less than their aspirations. "He made the Captain of our Salvation perfect through suffering." That is the whole principle of the Incarnation. Leadership in the Christian conception is not from the platform, but from the floor of the House.

Leadership is not a matter of technique, but of temper and quality of spirit. Many people have the technique, but not the qualities of leaders. For example, in the war, the "good with men and boys" type of padre generally

failed, and the most improbable people had the most influence. There was, men said, "something about them"! Can we analyse it? What are the qualities that men will follow? To formulate them is really only a different way of describing the kind of life in which God is Sovereign.

Firstly, the man we will follow is intensely unself-conscious with his whole life centred on the cause he serves. About this the Bible is inexorable: "A prophet who speaks in his own name—the Lord has not sent him." The fussy and self-conscious person is obviously out of touch with God. Was Jesus ever wounded in His pride, concerned about His position, or did He ever propose to "keep people in their place"? Rather He was "as one who serves."

Yet, though unself-conscious, there is an inner certainty about the true leader; he has a sureness of touch, and he is always sure of himself. This is true of nearly all the Saints; they spread an atmosphere of confidence, heightening morale, and were undismayed in failure or adversity. Why? Because they vitally *believed*. "He shall not be afraid for any evil tidings. . . . His heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord." Jesus was never "rattled"; He was always master of every situation, because God was the centre of His thinking.

The leader, too, has a fine recklessness about him. He infects men with his own daring because they can trust his intuitions. We know that he has an eye for essentials and knows what he really wants and what really matters, and has a fine scorn of consequences in regard to what is of secondary importance. He scraps the piano to save the rifle oil! All this means that our leader is a realist, with his vision centred on Reality. This is seen clearly in the risks St. Paul took; and again in Jesus, throwing His career away. "How foolish," said Peter, but Jesus knew God. We are too worried about possible consequences; whatever we do there will be consequences;

every step we take creates new problems. If it is the right step the problems are soluble: if it is not right, then we are in a blind alley. But the man whose mind is "at God" knows the next step, and that is all that anyone can ask.

Again, the leader is interested in us; Jesus was passionately concerned with men and women, but one can only care for men and women when one begins to see how much God cares for them. The very hairs of our heads are all numbered. He had always time for individuals as though nobody else mattered, and He noticed when even in the multitude: "Somebody touched Me." The true greatness of the divine mind is capacity for concern with the experience of individuals. "He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." We perhaps can run a big concern, but can we also love Dick, Tom and Harry?

Our leader also believes in us and so draws the best out of us. The mere fact that we are surrounded by crowds of docile disciples shows merely that we are good dry nurses. The Captain of Men evokes initiative and treats his subordinates as fellow-shepherds, not as sheep-dogs. Jesus did not say: "I will make you nets," but "I will make you fishers of men," with all the initiative and skill and discretion that such a trade involves. But only a vital belief in God makes possible a vital belief in other people. Think of Jesus and the Twelve: how stupid they were; what funks; yet He trusted them even as He trusts us, and evoked the highest out of them, turning them into leaders and heroes. Jesus was a realist all the time: but He saw people *as God will make them.* Christianity is the only religion which really believes in "the man in the third-class carriage." The Christian knows what can be made of human nature, when the Spirit of God gets to work upon it. But always we need a constant renewal of our certainty of God *at work.* We should train ourselves to record and give thanks for all the signs we have seen each day of the Presence and the Power

of God in our own lives and in those of others. Then we shall have a Gospel for our friends. Then, in the times of darkness, we can say: "There is much that I cannot profess to understand; I can make but a small claim to a knowledge of God, but at least there is something I can give you: 'I will tell you what He has done for my soul.'"

XVIII.—INTO ALL THE WORLD

Sometimes I wonder what old Alderman Croke, on whose Chantry Tomb yonder the First Lamp of Maintenance reposes, makes of it all! He was familiar enough with fraternities. Indeed, he was honorary Warden of that distinguished body of lay Churchmen who held in their trust the traditions of the Cœur de Lion Chapel. But a fraternity which should hold the allegiance chiefly of young and unknown men, which should welcome knight and bowman, merchant and villein on even terms, which should embrace Lollards as gladly as ecclesiastical loyalists, which should blazon (as on our Casket) the Red Rose beside the White would be an insult to his culture and an enigma to his intelligence. Still more would he find it hard to credit that, beyond the clear-cut confines of contemporary Christendom, there would arise new worlds of such splendour and power that the future of the human race would lie more with them than with the world he knew. Even that world he would scarcely recognize; for the London that he loved, "the flower of cities all," was a mere market town, and her affairs a trickle of trade too tiny to be worth computing. In population only, he would find in London to-day twice the whole tally of all England as he knew it; and there was no other England then.

Sometimes I picture the good Sir John, stirred from his sleep by the oft-repeated mention of his name, awakening to examine the heraldry of the Branches, displayed upon the panels of the Casket. Some shields he would at once know and revere. They have not greatly changed all down the centuries—the Prince's coat, and Poperinghe

and Ypres; and London, too, bearing (am I correct in this?) the sword of St. Paul's martyrdom.

But Winnipeg and Buenos Aires, and the Malay States, and many another would be beyond his reckoning; still more, the shield of the Australian Commonwealth, when it joins them next December, if God so wills.

The world of good Sir John was, in fact, a small affair, no larger and far less stable than that Roman Empire in which (as on this day) Paul the Apostle was so wonderfully called to be a Master-Builder of Christ's Kingdom. Paul's world was at least a unity under the sway of Emperors, more than one of whom went mad with the vast authority they wielded. Yet their world itself was puny beside the unimaginable destiny of one small island, to them a minor and incidental conquest.

If history repeats itself, then somewhere in the world to-day a race and people are in their birth-throes, who will, when their hour is come, take by right of character their primacy among mankind. It is this potentiality, lurking behind the clamorous urgencies of to-day, which makes a journey such as that on which you send us a privilege beyond thanking for. To sow the tiniest seed of Toc H in Canada or Australasia is to initiate that which may, in the far future, find a tiny part to play in some vast development of social Christianity.

Once more, good Sir John lived at the end of an age, and his "Nunc Dimittis" was not for himself alone. In a measure he must have been conscious of all this, for already the wind was rising that comes before a dawn. Mediæval religion, so glowing two centuries before with life and vigour of expression, was by now in a sore state of decay. Men's sense of right and wrong, corrupted by incessant wars, seemed to be giving way altogether. War, even at its best, is desperate surgery, and can never really reach the roots of national decadence. Moreover, gunpowder was robbing it of its more debonair distinction, and "making all men of one height."

Again, Sir John had seen, perhaps, the birth of English printing; that strangest art, which sprang into practical perfection from the very first. The earliest printed books are still unrivalled. And with printing came the gift of Greek, driven westward by the catastrophe of Constantinople; a tragedy, remember, which shook men's faith in God, and yet was the one thing needed to bring new thought and freedom, to spur men on to strike their stuffy camps, and to resume their march on their eternal goal.

Sir John died 1477, and his tomb was seven years a-building. Midway between those dates, men from the city of Bristol were beginning, with a courage we cannot measure, to drive their tiny craft far west, returning with strange stories. Till then Europe was but a weak, beleaguered city, from which the Spirit of Christendom must prompt a sortie. So the grace was given, as ever in the nick of time, to carry through during the next few years the two greatest discoveries of history—the way to India by Good Hope, and the huge, blundering triumph, which brought the New World in to amend the stagnant mischiefs of the old.

. . . . . .

How is it with the world to-day, and what our task towards it? Most surely we must have one, for it was for nothing less than all the world, past, present and to come, for every human creature—that is, for every child of God—that Jesus strove and died. "Love not the world," says an oft-quoted ill-rendering of St. John. More truly is there inscribed in golden letters above the highest altar of our race, in the great cathedral that seeks not only the alms, but the prayers of Christendom to-day, upon its birthday: "Sic Deus dilexit mundum: So God loved the world." Jesus, in one great aspect of His supreme life was the first world-citizen, and Paul, in his following of Him here, was in this, at least, the truest of His interpreters. Nearly two thousand years later it was

given to a woman, a nursing sister, on the morning of her martyrdom, to utter the words which were, I think, the truest message of our time: "Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness for any one."

Surely, therefore, we must pray for the world, and particularly for that peculiar and awful responsibility of our race towards it. Our white stock, in the widest sense, has assumed the government of forty-seven million square miles of the earth's surface, leaving only four millions to the yellow races (more than one-quarter of mankind), and only two millions to the black, who, in Africa alone, will soon outnumber the white by nine to one. In the Empire of which we are all members six out of every seven persons are dark-skinned, and most of these, and millions of the whites as well, repudiate the Gospel of the Love of God. Yet the last century is said to have added, in rough reckoning, a hundred million to the household of Christ, and no other religion is making headway in the whole field. With most, the force we vaguely call Western Civilization, is taking away their gods, and laying them where they cannot rise again.

The supreme issue of the world to-day is Colour. Two shillings spent on *The Clash of Colour*, by Basil Mathews, will introduce the problem to you in all its poignancy. What shall we say, therefore? Are we content to believe that the law of the jungle, conquering hate with hate, is the solution, or indeed any solution at all? Or are we at last prepared to attach more than a poetic value to the prophecy of Jesus that "the meek shall inherit the earth?"

At first it is the hardest of His sayings. Only when you begin to reflect do you begin to believe. France in 1815, Germany in 1918—what does it mean except that the will to dominate by force evokes a bitter disillusionment? History is full of God's dealings with the proud. Quite literally, He puts them down. Quite literally, again, it is true that "Righteousness exalteth a nation."

The contagious holiness of Joan of Arc was a force that could not be denied. What then of our own race and its so vast responsibilities? They are our kindred according to the flesh, and wherever they are stationed the chastisement of our peace is upon them. Could one go out into the British Empire with a purer or more needed gospel than that of Fellowship and Service? Fellowship—that they should be towards each other not strangers in strange lands, but one in the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

And Service! The upholding before the myriad peoples of the East, who judge the Christ by them, of all those habits of honour and integrity, of sympathy and selflessness, which He came to cast like fire among the corruptions of a world which was at its worst too ghastly to be named, and, even at its best, had never climbed from clemency up to the love of subject peoples. If at home, Sundays, however strict, will never win the world of commerce; abroad a few ill-paid missionaries, no matter how devoted, will never win the morrow for Him. Week by week already to all parts of the world our Family sends out its sons. Their numbers grow unceasingly, and if the lives they lead, the tone they set, the faith they carry with them is endowed with constancy by our thoughtful prayers, Toc H will be contributing its little quota of true men to the Christian citizenship of the Empire and of the world at large.

Observe, that it is not the weak, but the meek who shall inherit, and there is all the difference of clean contraries between them. For the weak are ever searching to disguise their impotence in petty pride and thunder, but the meek are surely the spiritually strong; the serene citizens of a city that cannot be shaken; God's people who shall never be ashamed.

XIX.—THREE SIMPLE THINGS

I AM to fill the gap on the clock-face till the turn for your tea-time comes; and by your leave, I will do so by reminding you of three passages in the New Testament. All the afternoon you have had presented to you, in the most wonderful way, the great wide issues of the World Call; and then a brilliant little impressionist picture of the problems of Toc H in South Africa. I am going back behind all this to the three earthly needs recorded as from the lips of Jesus during His life on earth :—

I. *A Dinghy.*—The first thing we know He asked for early in His ministry was the loan of a little boat—" And He spake unto His disciples that a small ship should wait upon Him." It was not really a ship, it was just a dinghy. But the writers of the Gospels up to St. Luke were not, like him, men of a Mediterranean outlook; to them, therefore, Galilee was a sea and not a lake, and the small craft thereon deserved a more dignified name than St. Luke was prepared to give them. The boat now needed was the smallest of them all, with the shallowest draught—just something to use as an improvised pulpit for the afternoon. It is surely worth noting that Our Lord was not afraid of new methods; neither He, nor anyone else before Him, had hitherto devised a floating pulpit; but the dinghy met the difficulty, which was a real one. Up till now, the people on the edge of the crowd had not been able to get a glimpse of Him. He was too much surrounded and hemmed in by His friends, and by those who wanted some act of healing from Him; He was being impeded in His true work of teaching, and it was not in His character to tolerate so unnecessary an impediment when the remedy, however odd, lay near at hand.

In the world to-day it is much the same. Men worship the mere nets which they are meant to mend or to discard. The cause of religion suffers because we come to idolise old methods for their age, however different the circumstances they were originally intended to meet. Perhaps sometimes we also hem Jesus in, and make it more difficult for the late-comers standing so shyly in the background to get a glimpse of Him. We are timid of new ideas, but Jesus never dreaded an experiment. May we dare to think of Toc H at its best as a little dinghy He has deigned to permit to wait upon Him; a makeshift which may aspire to serve as some new link with men and women, boys and girls, whom He is here to win ?

II. *A Donkey.*—After three years, He asked for something else. This time it was a donkey—whose name and nature is ever a consoling thought to me, and perhaps to some of you. Toc H is bound to alter as it grows, and sometimes *seems* to alter far more than we expected or desired; but I am convinced that at its heart it remains the wonderful thing God made, and that it will remain so, so long as it loves simplicity sincerely. Affected simplicity is a most miserable hypocrisy, but this is because simplicity itself is the one dress in which all charity becomes irresistible. Be sure, therefore, whatever else you do, to keep Toc H in a pure simplicity of spirit; don't let it grow expensive or inaccessible to the common or garden men and women. (I don't know how the phrase " common or garden " originated. According to Genesis it was only when the man and woman left the Garden that they became common; and it is only when we let Toc H leave its proper process of grinding away at the new corn continuously coming in, that the upper and the nether millstone begin to irritate one another.)

Is there not somewhere a story of Horace Walpole spending a week-end in a great country-house, and going with his host, out of mere curiosity, to hear John Wesley preach. When they came home they agreed that it had

been dull enough in all conscience, and that they could not understand why the great gathering had been so deeply stirred. They referred this matter to a friend of Wesley, who asked in answer, "Sirs, were you low enough to be blessed?" We shall never get a benediction if we hold our noses in the air.

There is nothing banal or unworthy about being simple: nor does the presence of a practical bent in a person necessarily exclude very different capacities in the hinterland of the same character. Others besides artists may do well to remember that Leonardo da Vinci both painted the supreme fresco of the Last Supper, and also invented that humble instrument of out-door labour which we call a wheelbarrow. As one moves about through Toc H, or Toc H moves about through Manchester, the test question must always be, "Are not all these Galilæans?"

III. *A Drink.*—Five days later, Our Lord asked for one more simple thing, a drink to assuage the utter agony of His thirst. He did so, says the Gospel, to fulfil a prophecy. He did so also because His dying need was intense, and He clung no closer to the Cross than to the principle that His divine powers might not be used under any provocation on His own behalf. Yet even more He did so as an act of crowning confidence in human nature, of the flaws in which no one since the world began had ever had more cause to be conscious. His whole earthly life might have been planned to produce a spirit of everlasting embitterment against mankind for fickleness and frailty, for falseness, cowardice, treachery, and sheer desertion. At this last moment no single friend stood near Him; yet looking down upon the faces of His foes, upturned like a snarling sea, He named His need in the serenest certainty that it would at once be met. How thankful we must be that at this last moment human nature responded; as often, from an unexpected quarter. What He asked was tendered by an unknown, obscure man, acting, as it were, on behalf of all that has been best

in human instinct since man was made. And He who had vowed that He would drink no more of the fruit of the vine until He drank it anew in His Father's Kingdom, deigned for the last time to play the beggar and to allow the acrid sponge to moisten His most royal lips.

Plainly, Jesus did not share the view of those who regard it as a sign of weakness to be beholden to anyone whatsoever; and few things can help us more than thus to find Him ready, not only to give, but to receive from men. This unknown soldier ran quickly to Christ's succour, reckoning nothing of the world's opinion; and the world at least in tacit tolerance consented unto his good deed. Christ had asked for it with all the confidence that a child would show within a house of love; and as a child received it without questioning or open gratitude. There had been nothing about sour sponges for crucified Reformers in the commitment that He had laid upon His disciples; yet at a safe distance they may have remembered the cup of cold water which no little one should henceforth seek in vain. But the first to fulfil the spirit of the commandment was not one of them at all. It is not, therefore, the unknown soldier of Flanders who should stand alone in Toc H as the sole pattern for all our praises; the unknown soldier of Calvary may worthily bear him company as the first half-believer whose services Christ accepted.

We shall not go far wrong in Toc H if we can continually be testing the main body year by year by its willingness to minister to the needs which, in manifold ways, God does not cease to express. Our life one with another, if homely and unassuming, if simple and sincere, is rightly full of social happiness. But the spirit of self-indulgence must never be allowed to invade even the outer area of our homestead, lest the safety zone that looks so barren and inhospitable fail us when the forest fire sweeps on. Toc H now grows so fast that any detailed process of control or regulation becomes quite frankly inconceivable.

We must rest on this, and this alone—that in every area the neighbourly spirit will be shown between units in all stages of growth, and shown in no sloppy way, but with a sternness against the slack, the merely social, the slovenly, or the self-seeking, which will make it clear to all concerned that the slaking of Christ's thirst is a summons for ever in our ears as the supreme criterion of conduct befitting those who would be of His family. Where there is one man, He said, who is trying to do God's will, that one man is My brother. Where therefore there is one tiny Group with neither money, home, nor influence, struggling as Stockport first began and many others like them, there are they whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren.

But the way of whist drives and dances, fêtes and field-days, will never lead us to that brotherhood, either with Him or with one another. The only dividend God cares about is changed and better lives, lifted from idleness to eagerness, from listlessness to love.

It so happens that I have with me two letters only just received from Newfoundland; where, under difficulties we cannot measure, Toc H is now on foot—a fact we owe in part to Sir Alfred Pickford's meeting with two ever-faithful men, and the post-mark of Newfoundland stirs in me the memory of the old story current along that cruel coast—how when the tackle is hard frozen, the fishing boat's one chance is to move as best it may, not homeward, but into the mysterious course of the Gulf Stream. Once this is reached the sheets will soon be sheets once more, and ropes no longer icicles. Beyond and behind all other motives which draw us to these Festivals, there is a longing for true renewal. God grant that, when we part to-morrow, He may indeed not separate us in spirit, but send us back to our scattered fishing grounds with fresh vigour, faith and resolution.

XX.—TO A CAMP CHIEF CONCERNED WITH A CLASS ON RELIGION AND ROVERING

1. I would ram home the fact that Christianity to-day stands at par for the first time since Darwin. By this I mean that the Rover men should stand convinced that some of the finest brains in Europe conscientiously believe Christianity to be true. It would be absurd to begin to go into all this now; but the things Professor Eddington is saying are things we scarcely dreamed of twenty years ago. Materialism has a false bottom to it, and is demonstrably deficient and inadequate. Streeter's new book, *Reality*, should carry conviction here.

It is surely of the first importance to make your Rover Course realize that they are not teaching a decaying or defunct religion which needs to be propped up with a continual series of diminutions and apologies. The whole Christian thesis is a real theory of the universe; tenable and even probable. They must teach it with conviction in their own minds, or they will do more harm than good.

2. Christianity is far more than a philosophic theory; it presents a way of life—we think *the* way of life. It allows a great deal of elasticity in treatment and method; it is impatient of small-minded people; and if clouded with compromise the whole vigour of its teaching becomes obscured. The central reality for every Scout must be the majestic Fatherhood of Almighty God; not only the Creator of the world and man, but the Employer and Task-master of every good energy He has given them. This God must emerge out of the shadows and become the dominant factor in every decision, great and small;

for the small decisions, in our eyes unimportant, may be the turning point of a whole career, the crisis upon which the great campaign of life itself hinges. In God's sight everything matters, and every one.

3. Christ, Who is God in action, flung Himself to the rescue of man on the only basis and in the only way whereby true love can operate. He would not force men's allegiance ; and any boy who likes can turn from Him, now and for ever. True, a boy may be compelled to go to Church or Chapel, but this is not Christ's doing ; it is merely discipline disguised as devotion. Christ came to give men freedom, and there is a fine pride in His dealing with each one of us. He will not tarry for man or nation which does not compel Him to come in.

No one can be holy in a hurry; and no one—not even a Scouter—understands a character through and through at the first glance. If this is so, how foolish and slack to imagine that the immeasurable content of the Master's mind can be comprehended in a few spare moments. Scouters will never learn religion in their Scouting unless it is put first, as indeed it stands, in the Scout Law. This does not necessarily mean neglect elsewhere ; nor the continual harping upon, and hinting at, the prettier paths of piety. " Be good, and you will be happy," is inadequate, and even, in a sense, untrue. Let your first Good Turn be to turn self out, and to turn over a new leaf is teaching not a little needed. The life of Jesus proves, among much else, that the man who means to do good must himself be good. An immoral artist may paint a good picture, an unprincipled statesman make a good speech, but Good itself cannot flow through a clogged channel any more than the sun can shine through the moon at an eclipse.

So Jesus was not only a teacher, not only a reformer, not only a doctor in advance of all the specialists, not only the most courageous soul, the greatest mind, the purest nature-lover, the noblest, tenderest leader there has ever been—He won something for the world which the

world could not win for itself. He left a mark indelible, and altered human history; and childhood, boyhood, manhood and womanhood owe all their best ideals not only to His teaching, but to His life; not only to His life, but to His death; not only to His death, but to His rising again. It was not a parson, but the greatest historian of our age, Lord Acton, whose mature judgment on modern history was summed up in the words: "The action of Christ who is risen upon mankind whom He redeemed fails not but increases."

4. We all forget things. Sometimes it is a mercy that we can forget; but sometimes the faculty of forgetfulness is misused, and then we suffer for it; for nature knows no pity for our follies. To forget ourselves in our eagerness to help others is often the truest Scout-craft; but to forget ourselves in the other sense of the word is merely to lose command of our tempers, which makes us most ridiculous. To forget ourselves in the still deeper sense; to be content with trivial things; to live on the surface; to seek nothing more than popularity with boys or men; to go with the crowd; to float with the stream, is the function of a drowned cat, not of a man.

When, as sometimes, I am unhappy about the name "Rover" as implying lack or direction and purpose—the very last attributes it should denote—I like to think of it as a portmanteau word, after the manner of Lewis Carroll, composed of two Latin words, *robur* meaning strength, and *ver*, the spring. Not that we are all strong springtime men, or likely ever to be so; but we must be men who love strength enough to know wherein we lack it. We must be eager—passionately, perpetually eager—to be adding to our stock of strength in that we are determined to be instruments of strength to others. Now, if the very weakness of God is stronger than men, His strength must be strength indeed. Sometimes we lose this thought through getting dazzled by His still supremer quality of love; but the character of God as shown in Christ is

undeviating and inflexible. Men broke His body, and He bade them break it till the end of time. Men spilt His blood, and He bade them drink it till the stars grow cold. Men hissed upon Him and He died; but within forty days He breathed upon His chosen few. Those few were then inspired with qualities unparalleled in any Movement in the world before them.

At sundry times, and in divers places, God has been dealing with man's life everywhere from the first. So far from shining on one race only, He has shone in saints and sages upon them all. No class or party in England to-day has a monopoly in good men. No Scout Troop is uniformly, boy for boy, superior to every other; but many Scout Troops think so, and we humour their pride; and many classes think so, and we suffer in consequence; and many nations think so, hence wars and worse; and many of God's servants think so, and this is worst of all.

Christianity is catholic and conclusive, not because it contradicts the light of God mirrored in many minds and many ages, but because it comprehends the noblest and truest teaching of them all. It was not only Judaism, but Buddhism, Hinduism, and all the ancient East, that Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil.

Yet the men must not judge by petty similarities in the externals of the various religions, covering as they often do internal divergences of a fundamental kind. All religions are not equally good, as all cross-country runners do not finish the course simultaneously. If there is no fear in love, there is no fog in truth. Yet we cannot know completely, for our minds are not so constructed as to be capable of containing more than the broken arc of earthly knowledge. Meanwhile, we must do our best and teach our Scouts to love not only a good time, but a hard time; not only ease, but work; not only singing, but sweating; not only gain, but strain; not only truthfulness, but truth in itself for itself, a goal and a beginning in one. We must teach them to despise second-hand thinking and

give them quiet times as well as noisy ones. Five minutes in silence under the stars when the last encore has been omitted, and camp-fire prayers are still to come, will do far more for them than perhaps the singing or the prayers together; for both may be too easy to make demands upon their wonder, and it is in wonder that real religion is born. Let them learn what it is to be alone, and they will love the brotherhood; let them know their weakness, and they will cry to the strong for strength; let them drink in something of the magnitude which makes all men small, and they will be readier for the news of the Love which makes the smallest boy, just up from the Pack, a little brother to the Son of God Eternal.

5. All this they must express in normal and abnormal ways. Teach them not to worship the ways; but to worship Him Who is where all true ways meet, where all hard roads lead home. Teach them that there is no God Who reveals Himself to the lazy or half-hearted, or the insincere; that mere gas when it ignites, only results in a Will-o'-the-Wisp hanging in futile brilliance over boggy ground; that the true God must be sought and wooed and won, like their true love in the days to be. Likewise that discipleship and discipline are two words closely related, and that while Christ never used the word "obey," He never used it because everyone, however much they misunderstood Him, realized that obedience, implicit, unquestioning, instantaneous, was of the very essence of His teaching. Bid them hold faithfully to the great affirmatives of their respective codes of faith, and to respect with utter chivalry the faith of others. Teach them to see the best in others and the worst in themselves; to think of themselves when they do so as poor fish by comparison with the rest of their Patrol: or if they honestly cannot do this, to count all the causes which have given them an unfair start over others. Teach them that there are good men in all religions, and good Christians in every area of Christendom. Teach them that Popes

and Presbyterians, Anglo-Catholics and Anabaptists say the Lord's Prayer and mean it equally.

Teach them, none the less, to have a true family pride in the faithful fulfilment of their own religious obligations. Let them love their Church, whatever Church it be; and woe worth the man who takes them from it by some easy idle jest unworthy of the great name of Scout. And when you yourselves would venture, as men far travelled from the East in which the spirit of a boy still dwells, to talk of the things of Christ and show them unto them, pray passionately beforehand lest you slur and smudge where you would stir and kindle.

The last word in feeding the young lies with the old shepherd, who said that the young flock could best be fed if three rules were observed:

Feed 'em little, *i.e.* chop it fine;
Feed 'em often;
Feed 'em warm.

XXI.—IN TRIBUTE TO HERBERT FLEMING

We that would eat the Divine Bread, and drink Love Incorruptible, appear this day not empty-handed. For one who has often stood and offered at this old altar the sacrifice of Praise, whose lips and hands have fed us with Word and Sacrament, whose mind has long been busy with our cares, has passed to be with Him in whose company he even here so greatly delighted.

Even here, Herbert loved nothing more than to speak of his Lord, and to set his feet in the print of His shoe; to gather His words and share them with the hungry, to desire His countenance, and to lead us, one by one, or hand in hand, rich and poor, and a Family indeed, to the light of the only Life his heart was set upon. From that same Life here lifted, Herbert had drawn much already, in many patient years of personal consecration. He was gentle. Did we ever know him harsh in judgment? He was patient. Did any one of us know him eager to have done with us? He was meek. Yet the strongest felt his sway. He was knit to growing weakness, as his days went on. Yet who more free of pity for himself, more full of it for others? As a natural man he was girt with great constancy and courage, and a certain smouldering fire lay, never quite extinguished, beneath his outward equanimity. But nature and grace go hand in hand when the whole life is dipped in Jordan day by day. He was indeed a man of prayer and praise, who dwelt on heights so long that he did not think of them as high at all. Now he has passed over, well-nigh dry-shod; for he lived long by the river-side, and its tide was low and loving to him. Yet there was no time for words, but only for a beckon of farewell to his friends and fellow-servants.

Why his summons was so urgent, we know not now; but we shall know hereafter. It must have been a great need which only he, a friend of so many souls yonder, could meet to their advantage. Perhaps the Guards were ordered into action in some sublime endeavour, and asked one thing—to have him with them. Perhaps some group of backward, wayward learners were aching for his gleaming gifts of courtesy and patience. We may be sure that five minutes after death all men know that God is true; but many are sore put to it to see the step they must take then towards Him. They discover themselves dunces, and they would make amends. So God's Love gave them in their need this gentle teacher, who would nurture them into the true knowledge, now that debates and doubts were ended.

For us his going is an act of confidence, which will seal us every one to see that his work here does not crumble away. His pupils must now teach others; his converts turn many to righteousness.

> And straight was the path of gold for him,
> And the need of a world of men for me—

But not merely the need of their companionship; rather the need that I, who have known Herbert, may be ready to share with others the lessons of his life, the profit of his tranquil, tireless aid with mine.

He died, as he would have wished, upon the touch-line, watching a younger generation pack down to a great clean game, every mood and movement of which was intimately known to him. He is on the touch-line of our lives for good; and another snatch of Browning tells us how keen and discerning are the company among whom he stands:

> We are beside you in all your ways,
> With our blame, with our praise,
> Our shame to feel, our pride to shew,
> Glad, Angry, but indifferent—no!

Hither we therefore come to the trysting-place where Jesus has tarried for His own all down the ages. We come to-day with the richness of one more reunion laid up in Heaven; with one more human friend to help Christ prepare a place, where yet there is room; with one more voice to echo: "If it were not so, I would have told you"; with one more magnet to draw us to the Master, who is too wise to mourn when one more priest thus passes to his great "Well done"; with one more aid in understanding the eternal Reality of God behind the ebb and flow. See how only yesterday we parted from Herbert, and already we begin to meet again; for Jesus on the threshold brings our true friends with Him.

Therefore, in solemn truth these are the Four Points of this most Starry Sacrament—Communion, Thanksgiving, Memorial, Sacrifice. Yea, and let us ourselves, being gathered together in concord, with intentness of heart, cry unto Christ as from one soul earnestly that we also may be partakers of His great and glorious promises.

XXII.—ARMISTICE SUNDAY IN ST. PAUL'S

Then thought I to understand this, but it was too hard for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I the end of these men.—Psalm lxxiii, 15, 16.

I AM privileged to stand here to-night, not because I can in any way hope to do what is called justice to the day—I doubt whether any one could do that, least of all myself, but this privilege is given me because in years gone by a far greater privilege was mine. It was my privilege, owing to my job, to know and to learn to love more men who did not come home probably than any one else now alive. And as I look on you to-night in your thousands here, my memory goes back to a November night in 1915, when, for the first time—you know how one remembers a thing which happens for the first time, though it happens often again afterwards—when for the first time I took part in the burial of some men just killed, and just behind the lines. It was in a château, or the ruins of it, on the business side of Ypres, and the men were six of the Essex Regiment. I had seen them in their strength and happiness a few hours before. We carried them out on stretchers, as the kindly darkness came, sewn in their blankets, and their blankets running with blood, and soon, before we reached the spot where they were to lie we had to leave the stretcher-bearers behind, except for just four of them. The rest crouched behind a bit of wall, and the four of us went out across a place which was swept fitfully by a machine-gun, and carried one by one these bodies of our friends. We laid them as best we could in the scooped-out earth, already filled, shallow though the graves were, with muddy water. I remember one body in particular, so broken that you could not tell from its

shape which end should lie eastward; and then, crouching down just to mutter the committal and the Lord's Prayer and the Blessing, we went back, thankful that our task was accomplished, leaving over the grave only their sentinel crosses and bottles, soon to be broken, which contained slips of paper that bore the names of our friends. And I remember that, as we rejoined the other bearers under the lee of the wall, and we set to work with tufts of grass to wipe the blood off the stretchers before we folded them up, how I for one vowed that if God brought me through I would tell you and folk like you, and, above all, the younger world, something of what these men were.

And you—why are you here to-night? What brings you? You come to-night to do honour to these men, to show that you have not forgotten. Some to-day have forgotten. Some remember in such strange and inappropriate ways that it would be better almost had they forgotten. I am amazed to find that to-night should be with many a night solely devoted to feasting. But to spend great sums of money on this night of all nights on over-eating and over-drinking and over-dancing is to my mind scarcely decent. To spend money on oneself is always a bore. To spend much money on oneself is sin. You come here to remember. There are others that say, "Forget." They say "Forget" half bitterly, and God forbid that their advice should be taken. I do not blame them for it; I pity them. It is not merely a question of forgetting our deliverers. It is far more deeply and dangerously a question of forgetting those ideals which sustained them in life, and for which they died. They were idealists; and if we are not, we are false to them. Idealists may be dangerous people—so we are told—but more dangerous still is Bunyan's Man with the Muck-rake, who cannot lift his eyes to any ideals or believe in their existence. The worst enemy of the world is always the man of the

world. It is he who says that man has only one profession from the beginning onwards indefinitely, and that is war. It is the same mind again and again which says that for women prostitution is the oldest and therefore unalterable profession. The lack of ideals leaves the world loveless, and lovelessness is the ruin of the world.

You and I, we come here. Why here? Surely, in order to find a true answer to that question, we have to go back in our minds, as one scholar would have us do, to what may have been something of the origin of Christian worship. He says that in a certain village it became the custom to take all your troubles to the Carpenter. The Carpenter was not only a good carpenter, but He was a wise man, too, and with Him, carpentry and counsel, wisdom and wood-work, went together. So it came to be that the villagers again and again would climb the narrow street up the hill to the Carpenter's shop and receive from Him answers to their questions, relief in their troubles, light in their darkness, power in their difficulties, and would say to one another as they went away: "It is good that we found the Carpenter." And so to-night when you said, as you put on your hats and coats, "Let us go to St. Paul's," you were only like English people, disguising your real meaning. What you really meant was: "Let us go to the Carpenter and ask Him why do the boys not come home." He tells us why. The boys cannot come home because we will not let them. Have we behaved in these latter years in a way to draw their spirits home? Have we grown, as they would have us grow, more loving to one another? The Carpenter sits here in this greatest almost of all His workshops, with His bookshelves here and His bench there, making doors and windows. Are we using His doors that lead us one to another? Are we using His windows to teach us to look upon one another in love, as one great family redeemed by Him and re-redeemed by them?

Until we do so we hold them at arm's length. Their spirits cannot come home.

They loved their friends and fought side by side. Their friends came home. How do we treat their friends? Oh, I know we cannot all help with money. Big sums of money. We can all help with something, but it is best to help personally. A letter came yesterday[1] from the Guildhall beseeching employers of labour in this city to remember that there are 35,000 not so disabled but they could do work—eager to work, honest and upright, but lacking it. We were eager that they should enlist in our service a few years ago. Think of the million or more still fully able, walking the streets, many of them looking semi-starvation in the face. Think of the 58,000 who will never leave the hospital except when they exchange half-life for death. They are not only deserted by society but by ordinary folk as well. We must not continue to treat their friends and comrades thus. Once more they would say to us surely: Not only these, but those that are growing up; they are vital, more vital than any generation of boys has ever been to this stricken country. In that queer thing called Toc H, which grew out of an old house in Poperinghe, we deal not only with our old folk, but with this younger generation; because it is plain to see, if you think for one single minute, that you cannot remove from the world ten millions of its best men without leaving ten million cradles empty. And to leave the generation which lies between, upon whose shoulders these great tasks fall of translating the things those men died for—to leave those boys neglected and uncared for, untrained in body, mind and spirit, is madness. Therefore, it is the task of every one of us to strive to see that, so far as in us lies, God helping us, the generation of boyhood which is now growing up shall be the very finest that England has ever nurtured.

[1] 1923.

I told you at the beginning of a grave. Let me tell you—though I never thought to tell it—this far more tragic story. A boy, who used to be one of the hangers-on at one of the boys' clubs in Bermondsey—no mother, no father worth speaking of—a boy bred in the gutter, and not so splendid as some that are, when the war broke out, he thought, poor lad, that he would be a hero. He joined the Bermondsey battalion, and he came out, and, as the kind of life that he had had to lead did not give physical or moral stamina, on the Vimy Ridge he ran away—a thing you could not do in the Army. Two or three who knew him well went down and begged him off at the court-martial. His death-sentence was commuted to sixteen years' penal servitude, of which he only served three or four months. Then the battalion, broken by hard fighting, had for a new effort to recall its prisoners, and he joined them again up by us in Scottish Wood in the great Messines battle. On the second day of it he ran away again. Then there was no begging him off. The padre of the battalion was Basil Plumptre, who was killed himself two weeks after. And Basil Plumptre was a man who never said, till this, a bitter thing in all my hearing. He said this to a friend—it was a few hours after a little group of Bermondsey fellows had taken this boy out and shot him for your sake and for mine; he died for us as much as anyone—Basil Plumptre said, "When I was reading the Burial Service over him I came to the phrase, 'This our dear brother here departed,' and I said to myself, 'That is false; we waited till he was dead to call him that.'" If you would please the dead, if you would see the spirits of just men come home, see to it by every means in your power that every boy left to England is brought up to the best.

Lastly, it is only our Lord who can join us together. And if you would see the spirits of the dead come home, turn to Jesus, and follow Him truly. No trade revival

can bring balm to this stricken country. There is only one revival that this country deeply needs, and that revival must come first of all—and that is the revival of true religion. A great wave of true, sincere religion sweeping through this and other countries would alone justify that crucifixion. Therefore, when you look once more at the picture, "The Light of the World" yonder, remember that it is not only He that stands at the door and knocks, but that they stand with Him and beseech you by the love you bear them to love Him, too, and let Him in, and let them come home.

ON THE ROAD HOME

A little Litany for men in Toc H who have "come to themselves," but are still "a great way off."

℣. Out of the night, out of the darkness, out of a far country.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. Out of the littleness, when men love only themselves, out of the idleness, where there is no leisure for true living, out of the bitterness of the self-blinded.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. Out of the loneliness, where no man was on my right hand to know me, the solitude, where no man cared for his own soul, still less for mine, the lovelessness, where men live as they list, and hate it inwardly.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. Scarce knowing "how" or "why"; only that the call has come at last, and that "at last" is not too late.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. So out of favour and patience even with myself, too tired to mind the mockery behind me, or to heed the flung stone, or the wounding word.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. Condemning no one save myself, and judging no man now that my eyes are busy with my own heart: knowing at length how deaf I have been, how dull, how self-willed; how little heed I have given to conscience, and how greatly I have trespassed against the law of liberty.

℟. *The least of all Thy sons is coming home.*

℣. I am not worthy to be called Thy son.

℟. *Make me one of Thy hired servants.*

℣. Thou who dost say to the night "Depart!" and to the morning "Come!" to the streams "Be swift!" and to the mountains "Lift your heads on high!" in Thee only can failure be redeemed, and service sanctified. Fill me, therefore, with the spirit of true life, that penitence and obedience may lead on to joy and health.

℟. *So stretch I forth my hands.*

℣. I muse upon times past, and on footsteps I would follow. Make me more faithful to those Elder Brethren who kept their covenant with Thee in sacrifice.

℟. *When many of Thy sons came home.*

℣. Make me more mindful of that great cloud of witnesses, who in every age have won men's hearts by the loving sincerity of their daily lives.

℟. *So the noblest of Thy sons came home.*

℣. Make me remember above all the Christ, the King's own Son, obedient and commanding, clothed in a living vesture of the flame of love and truth.

℟. *So Thy Son Himself came home.*

℣. Then shall the joy of the redeemed fulfil the joy of the Redeemer.

℟. *By the hallowing anguish of His Cross make me know thee, serve thee, love thee.*

℣. Yea, this my Son was dead, and is alive again.

℟. *He was lost, and is found.*

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